Bengaluru Sunday, January 25, 2026 Pages 22 Vol 79 No 25 ₹8

DH on Sunday

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DECCAN HERALD
The Power of Good

Meet has sent message to opponents that JD(S) is strong: Gowda

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Underrated Pasadena

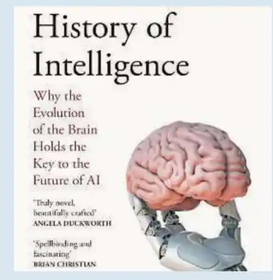
From Rose Bowl vibes to gardens and museums, this SoCal town has much to offer

Art & Pursuits *Page16*

An artist for all seasons

A sweeping centenary tribute honours Satish Gujral's restless imagination that was shaped by loss and rupture

Books *Page13*


History of Intelligence
Why the Evolution of the Brain Holds the Key to the Future of AI
"Truly novel, beautifully crafted" ANGELA DUCKWORTH
"Spellbinding and fascinating" BRIAN CHRISTIAN

Code to cells

A new crop of AI-biology crossover books is exploring how machines are reshaping our understanding of life itself

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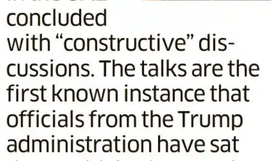
New on the menu

Star hotels are reinventing all-day dining formats to meet demand for curated experiences

Quickly



'There is path to remove 25% tariff on India'

US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said there is a "path" to remove the 25% tariffs imposed on India for buying Russian oil, noting that such purchases by New Delhi from Moscow have "collapsed". Bessent on Friday defined the sanctions imposed on India as a "success".
Details on Page 3

Zelenskyy says trilateral ended constructively

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Saturday that two days of trilateral talks with Russia and the US in the UAE concluded with "constructive" discussions. The talks are the first known instance that officials from the Trump administration have sat down with both countries.

Fresh BJP bid to form govt in Manipur

With only a few weeks left for the completion of one year of President's Rule in Manipur, the BJP is making a fresh bid to form a government in the state, sources said. President's Rule was imposed in the state on February 13, 2025. The sources said top leadership is keen on forming a government before the anniversary of the President's Rule.
Details on Page 3

T20 WC: B'desh dropped, Pak govt to take call

The ICC has pushed Bangladesh out of the T20 World Cup, bringing in Scotland after the BCB refused to let its team travel to India citing security concerns. The development was quickly followed by a response from Pakistan, with the PCB saying the government will take a call on whether its team will attend the tournament.
Details on Page 3

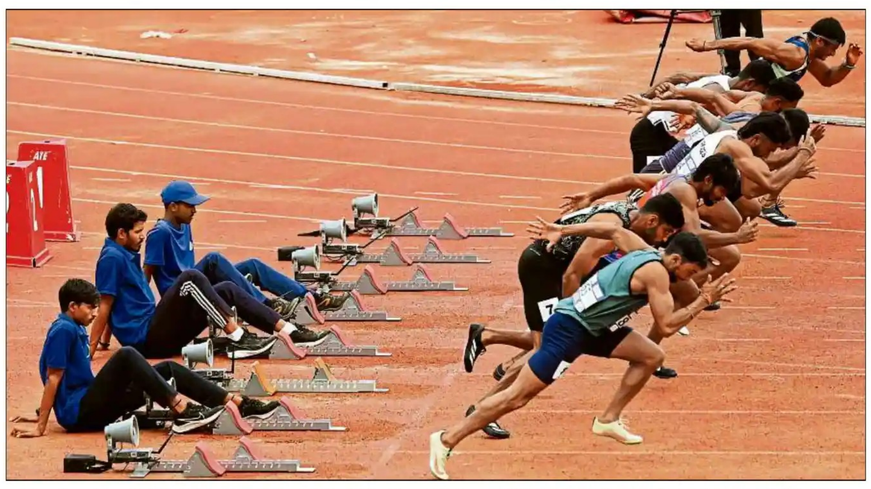
10,365 on K'taka 'sexual minorities' list

Karnataka has 10,365 sexual minorities, most of whom found acceptance by their families, but faced rejection and violence at educational institutions where they went to study, a state government survey said, recommending a 1% reservation for them in private-sector jobs. The government claimed that was India's first such exercise.
Details on Page 3

Off track: World-class dreams, sub-standard execution

From neglected infra to organisational chaos, India's sports bodies are turning major events into embarrassments, raising doubts about hosting the 2036 Olympics

ADITYA K HALDER
BENGALURU, DHNS



During the sprint races at the 63rd National Open Athletics Championships held in the Sree Kanteerava Stadium in Bengaluru in 2024, the 100m start exposed the stadium's substandard track, with volunteers physically holding the starting blocks to assist sprinters just before takeoff. DH PHOTO/PUSHKAR V

Back in 2017, FIFA official Javier Ceppi made an interesting observation about India's 'jugaad' culture. While serving as the tournament director for the FIFA U-17 World Cup, hosted across six venues, the polite Chilean appreciated Indians' ability to get things done at the 11th hour with limited resources. However, he added that this approach was more of a problem than a solution, urging a 'no jugaad' policy during his stint in the country.

INSIGHT

'Jugaad', however, is not going away from the Indian dictionary anytime soon — at least not from that of National Sports Federation (NSF) officials — as was evident in the shambolic hosting of the country's premier badminton tournament, the India Open, by the Badminton Association of India (BAI).

Even if one ignores the perennial concern of north India's air pollution, several other glitches exposed India's inability to pull off an event without issues. From bird droppings and a monkey among spectators to international players expressing concern over unhygienic conditions and a poor temperature control system at the Indira Gandhi Sports Arena in the national capital, the 2026 edition of the tournament left Indian sport red-faced — especially at a time when efforts are underway to land the hosting rights for the 2036 Olympics.

What is the point of building infrastructure worth several crores if you cannot maintain the facility? Two Danish players flagged their concerns about the conditions at the India Open, even as Indian players, for obvious reasons, rallied behind the organisers. World No 3 Anders Antonsen chose to cough up a USD 5,000 fine rather than play in the Super 750 event, citing hazardous weather conditions.

"Many are curious why I've pulled out of the India Open for the third year. Due to the extreme pollution in Delhi at the moment, I don't think it's a place to host a badminton tournament," Antonsen posted on his Instagram account.

His compatriot and women's World No 13, Mia Blichfeldt, also highlighted the capital's dangerous weather and poor practice facilities, before imploring the world badminton body to intervene to ensure better playing conditions when the venue hosts the World Championships, scheduled for August this year.

The media scrutiny, including from international outlets, was so stinging that the Sports Ministry asked the Sports Authority of India (SAI) to draw up a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to avoid a repeat of the slip-ups that marred the India Open.

That said, one should not ignore the good intentions of the BAI in shifting the tournament to the Indira Gandhi Sports Arena from its traditional venue, the KD Jadhav Indoor Hall, which is a stone's throw away. While KD Jadhav Indoor Hall has successfully hosted the India Open for years, the BAI was keen on relocating as the Badminton World Federation (BWF) had previously flagged its limited seating capacity when the Indian federation expressed interest in hosting big-ticket events such as the World Championships and Sudirman Cup.

▸ Sports infra, Page 2

Adolescent consent, Pocso and the Romeo-Juliet debate

Clear, nuanced rules on teen consent, which uphold autonomy while preventing coercion and abuse, can ensure protection and fairness

JAYNA KOTHARI

DH ILLUSTRATION: **DEEPAK HARICHANDAN**

With the increase in number of complaints being filed under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (Pocso) Act, 2012 there has been a growing sense in the courts that the Pocso Act is being misused, and that this needs to be curbed. There is also the argument that many of the cases arise out of consensual adolescent relationships.

This issue has taken a new direction with the Supreme Court in its judgement of January 9, 2026, in *State of Uttar Pradesh v Anuruddh*, where the question was whether at the stage of bail, the age of the victim could be considered and whether a defense could be raised by the accused that the victim was a major.

The Court has been observing in a series of cases that there are frequent contradictions in the recorded age of victims and a false depiction of majority as minority, often leading to the weaponisation of the Pocso Act against young couples in consensual relationships.

In this case, the Supreme Court held that the determination of age of the victim is a matter of trial and could not be done at the stage of bail. If the question of age is raised at the stage of bail, it is only open for the Court to take a prima facie view as to the age of the victim, not one on the correctness of the documents since that would amount to a mini trial.

While upholding the bail granted to the accused in this case, the Supreme Court used this judgement to raise alarm bells to say that the Pocso Act is often misused, where the age of the victim is misrepresented to make the incident fall under the stringent provisions of the law, or in instances where the law is used by families in opposition to relationships between young people. It observed that often Pocso cases were filed at the behest of a girl's family objecting to romantic involvement with a young boy due to which the young boys languished in jails. With these observations, it recommended the legislation to introduce a Romeo-Juliet clause exempting genuine adolescent relationships from the Act.

The SUNDAY STORY

Romeo-Juliet clauses are a welcome consideration, and certainly a step in the right direction. This is a legal provision exempting coverage of the law where teenagers are in consensual sexual relationships and the age difference between them is not more than three or four years. In such an instance, a Romeo-Juliet clause would provide an exemption to the age of consent under 18 years.

Key provisions for such exemptions would be: (a) that the relationship must be consensual, without violence or intimidation; (b) the members must be adolescents over 14 or 16 years of age; and (c) the maximum age difference between them must be 3 to 4 years.

In the Indian context, the variables that would need to be examined are what the age of consent would be in such a case, whether it should be 16 years or lower, and also what the maximum age difference should be.

▸ Pocso case, Page 2

MARUTI SUZUKI
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India's sports push ends in self goal

MADHU JAWALI
BENGALURU, DHNS

In recent years, several Gulf nations, most notably Saudi Arabia and Qatar, have spent staggering sums to bring some of the world's biggest sporting events to their respective countries. Qatar alone have hosted the FIFA World Cup in 2022, the Club World Cup in 2019 and 2020, the Arab Cup in 2021 and the FIFA Intercontinental Cup in 2024. Add to that the World Athletics Championships in 2019, the World Indoor Championships in 2010, and annual fixtures like Formula 1 and major tennis events. The ambition does not stop there. Qatar are now preparing a bid for the 2036 Olympics.

Saudi Arabia have been just as aggressive. They have already secured the hosting rights for the 2034 FIFA World Cup and made global headlines with the launch of LIV Golf, a breakaway league that lured top players from the PGA Tour with hard-to-refuse offers. The Saudi Arabian Grand Prix, the Dakar Rally and even the Spanish Super Cup are now regular fixtures in the country while cricket firmly remains in their radar.

For both nations, the motivation goes beyond sport. The belief is that staging flawless, high-profile events can soften global perceptions and help repair reputations long tarnished for poor human rights records, particularly when it comes to women and gender minorities. This strategy has a name: sportswashing, a blend of "sports" and "whitewash", aimed at masking uncomfortable realities. In many ways, Qatar and Saudi Arabia have made it work.

Spreading soft power

India, too, seem to be attempting something similar; they may not have any poor human rights records to gloss over, but the purpose of conducting sports events remains the same — spreading the country's soft power. They are, however, doing it without the planning or intent to pull it off convincingly. The result has been messy and, at times, embarrassing. Over the past few months, three international events have left Indian sports fans angry and red-faced, but largely powerless.

There were reports of multiple stray dog-biting incidents during the World Para Athletics Championships in Delhi. A T20 international between India and South Africa in Lucknow had to be abandoned because of a thick blanket of smog. Then came the India Open badminton tournament in Delhi, where foreign players openly complained about poor arrangements and avoidable inconveniences. All three events were played on the global stage, and all three brought the wrong kind of attention.

So what is going wrong? Is it a lack of pride, or plain indifference?

According to former India hockey goalkeeper Ashish Ballal, the answer is far more basic.

"No, because our administrators do not have the experience or the expertise to organise a sports event," he tells DHoS. "They neither hire event managers nor do they have dedicated people who run an event. These people think they can do everything, so nothing changes. It used to be the same situation 25 years back."

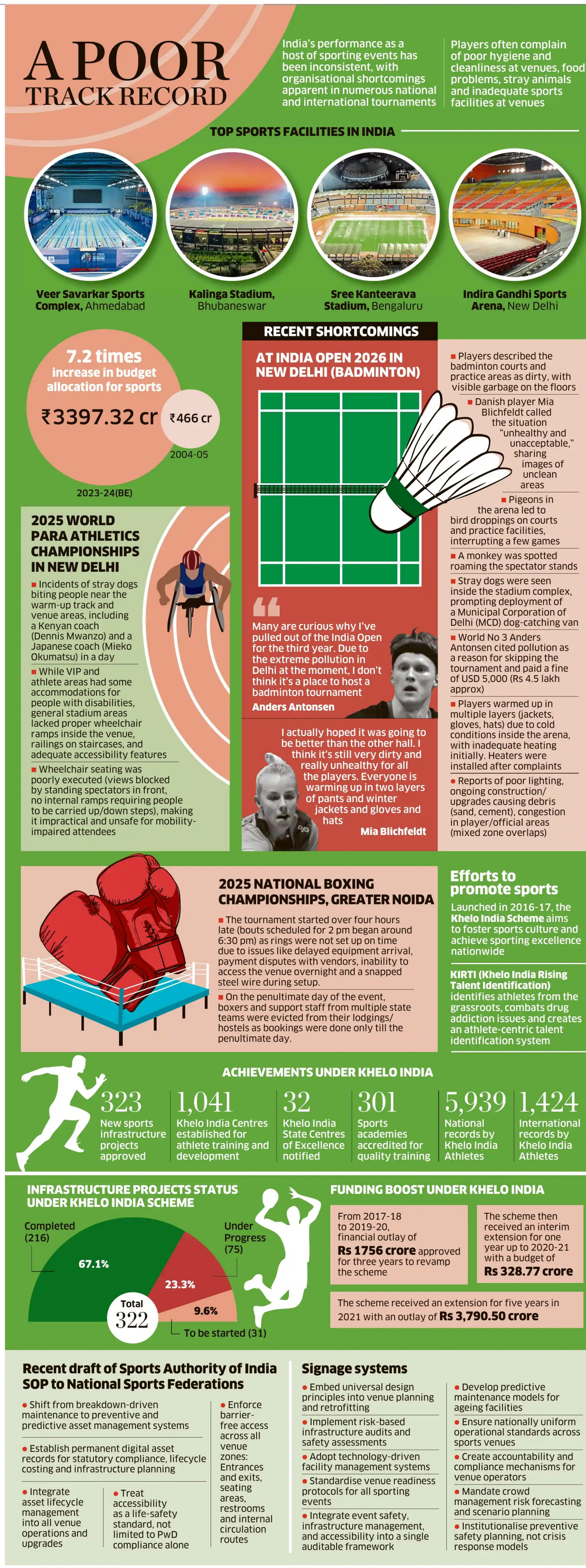
Role crisis

Ballal believes the root of the problem is a complete misunderstanding of roles.

"The problem is these administrators, and it's the same across all sports, don't know what their job is. Conducting a sports event is not at all their business. It should be left to domain experts. Why have we still not come to understand that a tournament has to be organised by professionals? As an administrator, your duty is to get money for the sport and see that sports grow at the grassroots so that more and more people take up sports."

There is also a patronising sense among most sports administrators. Conducting a sporting event or prioritising athletes' welfare is seen as an act of favour rather than an obligation.

Until that distinction is understood and acted upon, India risks hosting more events that promise prestige but deliver only disappointment.


A POOR TRACK RECORD
India's performance as a host of sporting events has been inconsistent, with organisational shortcomings apparent in numerous national and international tournaments
Players often complain of poor hygiene and cleanliness at venues, food problems, stray animals and inadequate sports facilities at venues
TOP SPORTS FACILITIES IN INDIA
Veer Savarkar Sports Complex, Ahmedabad
Kalinga Stadium, Bhubaneswar
Sree Kanteerava Stadium, Bengaluru
Indira Gandhi Sports Arena, New Delhi
7.2 times
increase in budget allocation for sports
₹3397.32 cr
₹466 cr
2004-05
2023-24(BE)
2025 WORLD PARA ATHLETICS CHAMPIONSHIPS IN NEW DELHI
Incidents of stray dogs biting people near the warm-up track and venue areas, including a Kenyan coach (Dennis Mwanzo) and a Japanese coach (Mieko Okumatsu) in a day
While VIP and athlete areas had some accommodations for people with disabilities, general stadium areas lacked proper wheelchair ramps inside the venue, railings on staircases, and adequate accessibility features
Wheelchair seating was poorly executed (views blocked by standing spectators in front, no internal ramps requiring people to be carried up/down steps), making it impractical and unsafe for mobility-impaired attendees
RECENT SHORTCOMINGS
AT INDIA OPEN 2026 IN NEW DELHI (BADMINTON)
Players described the badminton courts and practice areas as dirty, with visible garbage on the floors
Danish player Mia Blichfeldt called the situation "unhealthy and unacceptable," sharing images of unclean areas
Pigeons in the arena led to bird droppings on courts and practice facilities, interrupting a few games
A monkey was spotted roaming the spectator stands
Stray dogs were seen inside the stadium complex, prompting deployment of a Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) dog-catching van
World No 3 Anders Antonsen cited pollution as a reason for skipping the tournament and paid a fine of USD 5,000 (Rs 4.5 lakh approx)
Players warmed up in multiple layers (jackets, gloves, hats) due to cold conditions inside the arena, with inadequate heating initially. Heaters were installed after complaints
Reports of poor lighting, ongoing construction/ upgrades causing debris (sand, cement), congestion in player/official areas (mixed zone overlaps)
Many are curious why I've pulled out of the India Open for the third year. Due to the extreme pollution in Delhi at the moment, I don't think it's a place to host a badminton tournament
Anders Antonsen
I actually hoped it was going to be better than the other hall. I think it's still very dirty and really unhealthy for all the players. Everyone is warming up in two layers of pants and winter jackets and gloves and hats
Mia Blichfeldt
2025 NATIONAL BOXING CHAMPIONSHIPS, GREATER NOIDA
The tournament started over four hours late (bouts scheduled for 2 pm began around 6:30 pm) as rings were not set up on time due to issues like delayed equipment arrival, payment disputes with vendors, inability to access the venue overnight and a snapped steel wire during setup.
On the penultimate day of the event, boxers and support staff from multiple state teams were evicted from their lodgings/ hostels as bookings were done only till the penultimate day.
Efforts to promote sports
Launched in 2016-17, the Khelo India Scheme aims to foster sports culture and achieve sporting excellence nationwide
KIRTI (Khelo India Rising Talent Identification) identifies athletes from the grassroots, combats drug addiction issues and creates an athlete-centric talent identification system
ACHIEVEMENTS UNDER KHELO INDIA
323 New sports infrastructure projects approved
1,041 Khelo India Centres established for athlete training and development
32 Khelo India State Centres of Excellence notified
301 Sports academies accredited for quality training
5,939 National records by Khelo India Athletes
1,424 International records by Khelo India Athletes
INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS STATUS UNDER KHELO INDIA SCHEME
Completed (216)
67.1%
Under Progress (75)
23.3%
Total 322
9.6%
To be started (31)
FUNDING BOOST UNDER KHELO INDIA
From 2017-18 to 2019-20, financial outlay of Rs 1756 crore approved for three years to revamp the scheme
The scheme then received an interim extension for one year up to 2020-21 with a budget of Rs 328.77 crore
The scheme received an extension for five years in 2021 with an outlay of Rs 3,790.50 crore
Recent draft of Sports Authority of India SOP to National Sports Federations
Shift from breakdown-driven maintenance to preventive and predictive asset management systems
Establish permanent digital asset records for statutory compliance, lifecycle costing and infrastructure planning
Integrate asset lifecycle management into all venue operations and upgrades
Treat accessibility as a life-safety standard, not limited to PwD compliance alone
Enforce barrier-free access across all venue zones: Entrances and exits, seating areas, restrooms and internal circulation routes
Signage systems
Embed universal design principles into venue planning and retrofitting
Implement risk-based infrastructure audits and safety assessments
Adopt technology-driven facility management systems
Standardise venue readiness protocols for all sporting events
Integrate event safety, infrastructure management, and accessibility into a single auditable framework
Develop predictive maintenance models for ageing facilities
Ensure nationally uniform operational standards across sports venues
Create accountability and compliance mechanisms for venue operators
Mandate crowd management risk forecasting and scenario planning
Institutionalise preventive safety planning, not crisis response models
SOURCE: PIB, MEDIA REPORTS
COMPILED BY ADITYA K HALDER AND DIVYASHRI MUDAKAVI
DH GRAPHIC: SAGAR M S

Beyond the 'jugaad' mindset

Sports infra, from Page 1

With an 8,000-plus seating capacity and four available courts, the Indira Gandhi Sports Arena appeared to be an ideal choice over other venues such as Siri Fort or the dilapidated Thyagaraj Stadium, both of which have hosted badminton events in the past. However, opting for a stadium built in 1982 and refurbished in 2010 for the Commonwealth Games — with a known history of leakage and other issues — turned the India Open into an avoidable fiasco. If one were to ask the badminton body, it is unwilling to shoulder the entire blame.

"It would be wrong to pin all the blame on BAI for what happened in Delhi," a BAI official told *DH* on condition of anonymity. "We were handed the venue 10-11 days before the start of the tournament, while standard procedure is to hand it over to the local organising committee at least 20 days in advance. Especially for a facility as large as the IG Stadium, the window was too short."

DH also reached out to the SAI, which admitted that the presence of birds in the upper altars of the stadium is a real issue, as large air vents and ducts in the four-decade-old facility make it difficult to prevent such entry. The government body maintained that it had done its due diligence before handing over the venue to the organisers.

"The venue was handed over in time to BAI for setting up the field of play, practice areas and other requirements," an official said. "Routine cleaning and maintenance were carried out in advance."

"However, the presence of pigeons in the upper altars of the stadium premises is a real issue. With large openings such as air vents, ducts and shafts, it is a challenge to completely block their entry. Efforts are being made to seal vents and deploy nets wherever possible.

"More stringent SOPs are also being established to prevent future occurrences and ensure the successful hosting of such events."

That said, BAI had an opportunity to test the venue instead of treating the India Open as one, by hosting the National Badminton Championships at the IG Stadium rather than in Vijayawada in the last week of December.

Such a practice is not unheard of. The Swimming Federation of India (SFI) hosted the water polo and diving National Championships at the newly built Veer Savarkar Sports Complex in Ahmedabad last August, before staging the Asian Aquatics Championships at the same venue in September and October.

Speaking of the Asian Aquatics Championships, the tournament had some timing-related hiccups but, overall, did a commendable job of hosting the event for the first time. The city administration — and not the SFI — appeared determined to present a strong case for India's ability to host major events, especially for a city slated to host the 2030 Commonwealth Games as part of its ambitious bid for the 2036 Olympics.

Ahmedabad had also successfully hosted the Commonwealth Weightlifting Championships weeks earlier at the same venue, while simultaneously housing Indian aquatics teams for a national camp.

It would be incorrect to say that Ahmedabad alone is doing a good job of hosting international events. States such as Odisha have also fared well in hosting world-level hockey, table tennis and track and field events in recent years. In fact, Bhubaneswar is currently bidding to host both the Asian and World Indoor Athletics Championships in the same year, with inspections already conducted by World Athletics.

Multiple foreign athletes participating in the event spoke positively about the hospitality, with all teams accommodated in five-star hotels close to the venue.

Shoddy management

Unfortunately, these examples remain exceptions rather than the rule. Anyone who attends national-level competitions, including the Prime Minister's flagship Khelo India events, is familiar with the shoddy management that often goes unnoticed due to the absence of television cameras.

Last December's Boxing Nationals in Greater Noida was one such example that highlighted how Indian federations often manage to put on a good face for international events. While the Boxing World Cup Finals held weeks earlier passed without much fuss, glaring errors at the Nationals exposed the federation's shortcomings, even with elite boxers competing and a new high-performance director in place.

From rings not being set up on time to boxers — including international medallists — being evicted from hostels before contesting final bouts, the Boxing Federation of India's mismanagement was on full display after it failed to clear payments necessary to host the event.

"The event was close to the capital, which is why many journalists attended and everything came to light. Otherwise, this is how Nationals have been organised in the past as well, especially in second- or third-tier cities," said a World Championships medallist, speaking on condition of anonymity.

"Accommodation has been a problem for years, and even elite boxers are not spared. One also needs to look at the food served at venues. It's not something any elite boxer would consume, as deep-fried items are routinely served. Young athletes come from diverse backgrounds and have no choice but to eat it. They are the pipeline of India's boxing system."

Athletes from other Olympic disciplines echoed similar concerns, pointing to disappointing infrastructure at several venues across states, barring a few exceptions.

"If you look beyond a couple of venues, standards are far below the international level almost everywhere," said an Asian Games medallist. "Equipment is often outdated, tracks are wearing out, safety standards are not maintained, food is often not nutritious, hygiene is compromised... the list goes on. And yet, we are forced to compete at these national events, while our performances abroad are often ignored."

Multiple roadblocks

Amid all this, it is hard to overlook the never-ending troubles of Indian football. The Indian Super League (ISL) continues to face one roadblock after another, with the fixture list for the much-troubled, truncated season yet to be released, despite efforts by the Sports Ministry to get the league back on track.

ISL clubs are also grappling with financial uncertainty, as the budget presented by the All India Football Federation (AIFF) to run the league without its previous private partner has failed to inspire confidence. Stakeholders fear that cost overruns may now be passed on to them, prompting extreme — but necessary — measures such as player salary cuts.

This is a far cry from the days when ISL's former commercial partners promised a bright future, including World Cup dreams, for the Indian football team, which entered the FIFA top 100 on merit during Igor Štimac's tenure.

As a highly qualified coach, he stressed the players' fitness to handle international challenges and frequently fought the league and federation for proper national high-performance camps, among other concerns.

Since Štimac's departure, his successors have lacked the authority and credentials to move the team forward, and India slipped to as low as world No 140.

Yet, those entrusted with Indian sport are unwilling to give up — not when efforts are underway to secure the hosting rights for the Olympics.

"Everyone is talking as if the Olympics are just a year away and we need to be ready immediately," said an SAI official. "We still have 10 years. We will get there one step at a time. Every international tournament we host is a step towards becoming a sporting powerhouse, and every failure or success along the way is a lesson. As far as the upkeep of the venues are concerned, we are looking into various possibilities, including involvement of private players."

That said, India does not lack ambition; it lacks the required infrastructure, discipline and perhaps, the experience to consistently host big-ticket events. Until systems replace 'jugaad', the Olympics may remain a dream sold in presentations, not one built on the ground.

Pocso case, from Page 1

Protecting adolescents' rights without compromising safety

In many countries, the age difference is three years, and in other countries the maximum age difference is four or five years. The law would also need to provide as to how consent would be established in such cases. Hence, before introducing any Romeo-Juliet clause, there is a serious need for an empirical study of cases filed under the Pocso Act, which studies the ages of the parties involved and identifies cases where there is express consent.

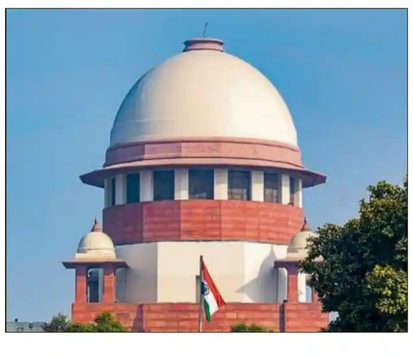
Reaching a consensus regarding the age of sexual consent or the maximum age difference is a difficult task, because the law must protect both sexual freedom for young persons and sexual indemnity in consensual relationships. Introducing the Romeo-Juliet clause could be fundamental in protecting legal rights, freedom and autonomy for adolescents and young persons as long as adolescents have consented to have sexual relations with a person close to them in age, so that there is no power imbalance and coercion. Such law reform also needs to be accompanied with sex education and awareness for adolescents to ensure that they fully understand the meaning of consent in sexual relations.

While this is a positive development and a progressive direction for law reform, there are serious areas of concern. Repeated observations are made by the courts that Pocso complaints are false and that the law is being misused. This has been raised by the High Courts and the Supreme Court not only to imply that girls' families are filing cases when they are unhappy with their relationships, but also to observe that complaints can sometimes be false when they are filed against close relatives including fathers, uncles or other relatives for child abuse.

In many such cases, courts have made observations that the Pocso Act is being misused. Such observations are dangerous, as they have the effect of casting doubt on the use of the entire legislation and affects genuine complaints that are filed. This has happened in the case of Section 498-A concerning domestic violence, of the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe (Prevention of Atrocities) Act 1989. Such observations are harmful and affect women and girls disproportionately.

While we explore progressive options for law reform, let us also be cautious and restrain blanket claims of misuse of the law, because the ultimate object of the law is to protect minors and adolescents from sexual assault and not cast doubt in every case. Let us not throw out the baby with the bathwater.

(Jayna Kothari is senior advocate, Supreme Court of India)



US treasury secy sees path to remove 25% tariff on India

Trump official says Russian crude imports 'collapsed' due to sanctions

NEW YORK, PTI

US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said there is a "path" to remove the 25% tariffs imposed on India for buying Russian oil, noting that such purchases by New Delhi from Moscow have "collapsed".

US President Donald Trump has imposed 50% tariffs on India, including 25% for its purchases of Russian oil, leading to a strain in the bilateral ties between the two countries.

Bessent on Friday defined the sanctions imposed on India as a "success".

"We put 25% tariffs on India for buying Russian oil. And the Indian purchases by their refineries of Russian oil have collapsed. So that is a success. The tariffs are still on. The 25% Russian oil tariffs are still on," Bessent said in an interview with Politico.

"I would imagine that there is a path to take them off. So that's a check and a huge success," he added.

Bessent also criticised Europe for not imposing tariffs on India.

"Our virtue-signalling European allies refused to do it (impose tariffs) because they wanted to sign this big trade deal with India," he said.

Bessent accused India of importing and refining more oil from Russia after the invasion of Ukraine.

"Before the Ukraine invasion, approximately 2% or 3% of Indian oil that went into their refineries came from Russia. The oil was sanctioned. It got deeply discounted and moved up into the high teens-17,18,19% was being refined. Huge profits from the refiners," he said.

He accused Europe of funding Russia's war by purchasing the oil refined in India.

"But in the ultimate act of irony and stupidity, guess who was buying the refined products from the Indian refineries made from Russian oil...the Europeans. They are financing the war against themselves," he added.

When asked if he called the Europeans "stupid", Bessent said, "I said there was an act of stupidity".

India and the EU are likely to announce the closure of negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement soon. India had described the US action as "unfair, unjustified and unreasonable" while maintaining that its energy policy is guided by its own national interest.

India fell to third place among buyers of Russian fossil fuels in December, after Reliance Industries and state-owned refiners sharply reduced their crude oil imports, according to the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA).

Trump had earlier warned that tariffs could increase further unless India curtailed its Russian oil purchases.

Media reports on Friday, citing trade data, said India's Russian crude purchases in December fell to their lowest in two years.

BESSENT'S REASONING

India's purchase of Russian crude has fallen

- Claims this as a big 'success' of US strategy
- Criticises Europe for not imposing tariffs on India
- Europe buying products made of Russian crude from India an act of 'stupidity'
- EU didn't slap tariff on India because it wanted to sign trade deal
- Europeans financing war against themselves

"We put 25% tariffs on India for buying Russian oil. And the Indian purchases by their refineries of Russian oil have collapsed. So that is a success... I would imagine that there is a path to take them (tariff) off. So that's a check and a huge success

SCOTT BESSENT, US Treasury Secretary

PM: Trade pacts opening up new opportunities

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said India is entering into trade and mobility agreements with various nations to create new opportunities for the youth both within the country and abroad. "India is signing trade and mobility agreements with several countries. These trade agreements are bringing new opportunities for the youth of the nation," the PM said.
Details on Page 7

BJP's fresh bid to form Manipur govt ahead of Prez Rule anniversary

AMRITA MADHUKALYA
NEW DELHI, DHNS

With only a few weeks left for the completion of one year of President's Rule in strife-torn Manipur, the BJP is making a fresh bid to form a government in the state, sources in the party said.

President's Rule was imposed in the northeastern state on February 13, 2025.

The sources said the party's top leadership is keen on forming a government before the anniversary of the President's Rule.

They said some of the state legislators are in Delhi as part of the efforts.

Former chief minister N Biren Singh had a meeting with Union Home Minister Amit Shah last week. Following this, some MLAs arrived in the national capital to make representations to the high command. BJP state president Adhikarimayum Sharda Devi was also in Delhi.

"We cannot say that peace has returned to the state completely, but there is some amount of normalcy. The BJP at the Centre is keen on forming a government, and they will take the views from all quarters to make an informed decision," a BJP legislator from Manipur said.

This is the second such effort in recent times. In December, the high command had held talks with legislators from the state.

The sources said a breakthrough might be in sight this time.

Last week, the Union government had held talks with Kuki representatives from the state.

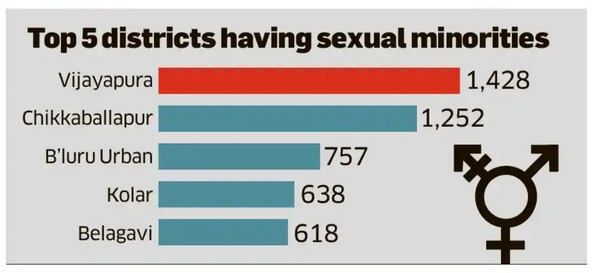
▸ **Manipur, Page 6**

Locals protest the killing of a man during ethnic conflict in Manipur. PTI FILE PHOTO

10,365 on 'sexual minorities' list; survey moots pvt sector quota

India's 1st study: Most of them accepted by families

BENGALURU, DHNS



Karnataka has 10,365 sexual minorities, most of whom found acceptance by their families, but faced rejection and violence at educational institutions where they went to study, a government survey said, recommending a 1% reservation for them in private-sector jobs.

Findings of the baseline survey, which the government said was India's first such exercise, were submitted to Women & Child Development Minister Laxmi Hebbalkar on Saturday.

Carried out between September 15 and November 21 last year, the survey report also recommends a special scholarship scheme for sexual minorities among other measures.

According to the 2011 Census, Karnataka had 20,266 transgender people. The state's survey has identified 10,250 adults and 115 minors as sexual minorities.

"It is reassuring that 60.62% out of 10,250 sexual minorities were accepted by their families. It is found that 39.38% of them have not been accepted," the report states.

Less than 2% of the sexual minorities are postgraduates. The survey found 17% of them to be illiterate, 16% went to high school and 11% completed Class 12 or pre-university. Nearly 25% of sexual minorities said they need financial help for education.

The survey found that 33% of sexual minorities faced violence during their educational pursuits, 36% said they were discriminated against and 25% quit studies.

According to the survey, nearly half of the sexual minorities (47%) belong to SC/ST communities and 12% are Muslims. Of all sexual minorities, 54% live in rural areas.

Less than 1% of sexual minorities have a state or central government job. Karnataka has a 1% reservation for transgender persons in direct recruitment to government jobs. About 13% of sexual minorities have a private-sector job, 3% work in self-help groups and 7% are self-employed.

▸ **Sexual minorities, Page 6**

ED attaches properties in two cases

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Enforcement Directorate (Bengaluru Zonal Office) has provisionally attached immovable properties in the engineering seat blocking scam involving BMS Educational Trust and in the PSI Recruitment Scam.

While properties, including a plot and two flats belonging to the trustees, worth Rs 19.46 crore were attached in the BMS case, in the SI recruitment case, properties of Amrit Paul (ADGP) and Sridhar H (head constable) worth Rs 1.53 crore were attached.
Details on Page 4

T20 WC: B'desh dropped, Pak govt to take call on team's participation

NEW DELHI/LAHORE, PTI

The ICC has pushed Bangladesh out of the upcoming T20 World Cup, bringing in Scotland after the BCB refused to let its team travel to India citing security concerns in the wake of Mustafizur Rahman's ouster from the IPL.

The development was quickly followed by a response from across India's border, with Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Mohsin Naqvi saying that the country's government will take a decision on whether its national team will participate in the tournament.

Pakistan are scheduled to play all their matches in Sri Lanka, including one with India on February 15 at Colombo, as per an agreement with the BCCI.

Scotland's entry has ended the month-long suspense after Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) insisted that their matches be shifted to Lanka.

At the ICC Board meeting, Bangladesh were taken to the cleaners with an overwhelming 14-2 verdict in favour of the 'Tigers' travelling to India for their games.

The ICC gave the BCB a 24-hour deadline to change its stance but with the interim government being adamant, the cricket crazy nation's hopes of playing the T20 World Cup went up in smoke.

It has been learnt that top ICC officials, including chairman Jay Shah, were in Dubai on Friday and an email was sent to the BCB informing about the decision.

▸ **T20 cup, Page 6**

3 injured as cutout collapses in Hubballi

HUBBALLI, DHNS: Three persons, including a woman, were seriously injured after a large political cutout installed on Mantur Road collapsed in Hubballi on Saturday. A big cutout was installed in connection with the house distribution ceremony by the Karnataka Slum Development Board.

The cutouts of CM Siddaramaiah and Minister Zameer Ahmed reportedly fell, trapping three persons.

Several cutouts of AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge and Congress leaders had been erected.
Details on Page 6

'Login details of 149 million accounts leaked'

NEW DELHI, PTI: Login credentials, including usernames and passwords, of over 149 million accounts of internet firms, including Gmail, Instagram, Facebook, and Netflix, have allegedly been leaked, a report published by ExpressVPN said.

The report published by cybersecurity researcher Jeremiah Fowler claims that the publicly exposed data includes 48 million accounts on Gmail, 4 million on Yahoo, 17 million on Facebook, 6.5 million on Instagram, 3.4 million on Netflix, 1.5 million on Outlook, etc.

"The exposed database was not password-protected," Fowler said.
Details on Page 7

WHITE-TOPPED

Vehicles stuck on the snow-covered Jammu-Srinagar National Highway after heavy snowfall in Kashmir on Saturday. The highway remained closed for the second consecutive day. PTI

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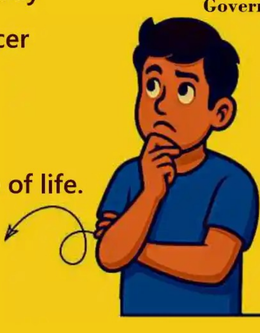

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Joint session row: Governor submits report to President

Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot is learnt to have submitted a 'report' to President Droupadi Murmu on developments surrounding the joint session of the legislature where he did not read the government-prepared speech and faced protests by Congress members. The report covers Jan 21, when a government delegation met him, and Jan 22, the day of the session.
P 5

SIR rollout in remaining states soon, says Chief Election Commissioner

Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar on Saturday said the special intensive revision of voters' lists in the remaining states will be rolled out soon as he described "pure" electoral rolls as the bedrock of democracy. On the eve of the Election Commission's foundation day -- also celebrated as National Voters' Day -- Kumar said the revision exercise is presently being conducted "smoothly".
P 7

WILDLIFE CARE

Vet shortage hits zoos across Karnataka

NRUPATHUNGA S K
DAVANGERE, DHNS

The recent wild animal deaths in zoos in Karnataka have brought to the fore the dearth of trained veterinarians in nine zoos coming under the Zoo Authority of Karnataka.

Of the 13 veterinarian posts in zoos in the state, 11 are manned by veterinary officers who are not Forest department employees but are either deputed from the Animal Husbandry & Veterinary Services Department or are on contract.

One post each is vacant at Chamarajendra Zoological Gardens, Mysuru and Bannerghatta Biological Park, Bengaluru.

The veterinary officers on deputation have no exposure to wildlife even during their academics. Most veterinarians feel they are treated like 'outsiders' by the forest department.

To address these issues, the state government has in principle reportedly agreed to create a cadre of wildlife veterinarians. If this happens, it would not only boost veterinarians' morale but also provide them facilities, including separate vehicles and treatment facilities.

Tyavarekoppa's Zoo-Cum-Safari executive director Amarakshara M V told *DH* that veterinary science students are not exposed to wildlife as they hardly spend a week in zoos during their internship.

Speaking to *DH*, Murali Manohar, a veterinary officer in Shivamogga zoo said he had spent only one week in a zoo during his internship. "We spent more time in dairy production and cattle treatment than in zoos. Since I am interested in wildlife, I chose to work in a zoo. I got to know about wildlife through reading and field visits." He opined that veterinary colleges must encourage students to spend at least one month in zoos.

"Since I am not given a vehicle, I depend on range forest officers for rescue operations. Delay in reaching the spot results in the death of wild animals."

Zoo Authority of Karnataka member secretary Sunil Panwar admitted to a dearth of trained veterinarians but said that all zoos, except mini zoos, have veterinary officers.

INTERVIEW K-RIDE MD on how hurdles are being cleared to finish project by 2030

We're moving again: All lines of suburban rail okayed

MUTHI-UR-RAHMAN SIDDIQUI
BENGALURU, DHNS

The Bengaluru Suburban Railway Project (BSRP) was envisioned as an affordable solution to city's traffic woes — easier to build, cheaper than Namma Metro and better integrated with the railway network.

But it has been plagued by delays — from alignment approvals to land hurdles to poor inter-agency coordination and train procurement challenges.

More than 3 months after the Oct 2025 deadline set by PM Narendra Modi passed with little progress, the project now appears to be gaining momentum.

Railway Infrastructure Development Company Karnataka (K-RIDE), the implementing agency, has a technocrat as full-time managing director for the first time in over 3 years.

Lakshman Singh, a 1996-batch IRSE officer with vast experience in railway projects, took charge as K-RIDE MD on Dec 1, 2025.

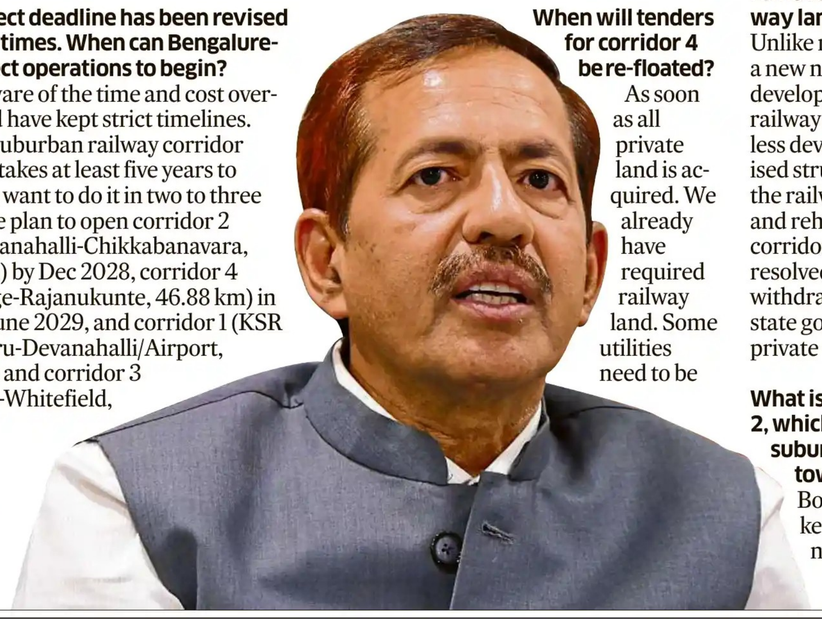
In his first wide-ranging interview since taking office, Singh tells *DH* how the 149-km project is getting back on track. Edited excerpts:

The project deadline has been revised multiple times. When can Bengalureans expect operations to begin?
We're aware of the time and cost overruns, and have kept strict timelines. While a suburban railway corridor typically takes at least five years to build, we want to do it in two to three years. We plan to open corridor 2 (Baiyappanahalli-Chikkabanavara, 25.01 km) by Dec 2028, corridor 4 (Heelalige-Rajanukunte, 46.88 km) in Mar or June 2029, and corridor 1 (KSR Bengaluru-Devanahalli/Airport, 49.9 km) and corridor 3 (Kengeri-Whitefield, 35.52 km) by Mar 2030.

The railways recently approved the alignment of corridor 1, which connects city centre with the airport. What are the next steps?
Based on approved alignment, we're assessing land requirements and will begin acquisition, which should take about a year. Utility shifting will be done in phases as land becomes available. While main construction will start in a year, work is already going on at Yeshwantpur, Lottegollahalli and Hebbal.

There were speculations that corridor 3 might be dropped.
The railways has approved corridor 3 alignment as per the DPR. It has created a suburban terminal with five stabling lines and as many platforms at Bengaluru Cantonment. Local train services will be originating from there. Issues such as fares and revenue-sharing will be decided at the government level when the entire infrastructure is ready.

When will tenders be awarded for corridor 2, after L&T pulled out in July?
We are working to award tenders at the earliest, but cannot specify a timeline.



Lakshman Singh, MD of Rail Infrastructure Development Company (Karnataka) Limited (K-RIDE).
DH PHOTO/B K JANARDHAN

When will tenders for corridor 4 be re-floated?
As soon as all private land is acquired. We already have required railway land. Some utilities need to be shifted and encroachments cleared. We are looking into them.

The state Cabinet has approved the project cost rise from Rs 15,767 crore to Rs 16,876 crore. Will there be further escalation?
There has been no change in scope of work, except that rolling stock will now be purchased, instead of leased. Cost escalation due to inflation and time overruns is inevitable. The revised cost will be worked out in due course after receiving competitive bids for all components.

Foreign lenders KfW and EIB will fund a large part of the project (over €800 mn). Are they worried about delays?
All financial institutions are with us. Loan agreements have been signed, but funds have not been drawn as they are not yet required. We will first use government equity through budgetary allocations. Funding has never been an issue because our progress slowed after the contractor (L&T) pulled out of the project. In 2026-27, we expect significant allocations as work speeds up.

Why has private land acquisition and removal of encroachments from railway land been so challenging?
Unlike metro, this project will create a new network within city, changing development patterns along existing railway tracks. While these areas are less developed, they have unauthorised structures. We are working with the railways to remove encroachments and rehabilitate affected people. For corridor 2, legal issues have been resolved through dialogue. People have withdrawn cases. We're working with state government agencies to expedite private land acquisition.

What is the status of the 146-km phase 2, which was proposed to extend suburban network to neighbouring towns?
Both the Centre and the state are keen to connect Bengaluru to neighbouring cities, and different options are being looked into. Much time has passed since phase 2 was proposed and new situations have emerged. Fresh origin-destination surveys are needed to assess demand. As a government agency, we will implement whatever is decided.

What is the status of rolling stock procurement?
We will purchase air-conditioned, metro-like coaches. Both the state and the railways have agreed to share the cost (Rs 4,270.3 crore) equally. The railways asked us to place orders with the Integral Coach Factory (ICF). We've approached the state for exemption under Sec 4(g) of Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurements Act, to procure coaches without floating tenders.

How many coaches will operations begin with?
We will start with six-coach trains on all corridors, instead of the earlier plan for three, and expand to nine coaches based on demand. We're building 205-metre-long platforms to accommodate nine coaches. At some stations, we may construct shorter platforms due to land constraints.

What will the KSR Bengaluru suburban station at Majestic look like?
It will be built on the median (of Gubbi Thotadappa Road), between the railway and bus stations. It will be a multi-modal hub, connected to railway and bus stations through skywalks and escalators.

How will the suburban rail share viaduct with metro's Blue line?
Benniganahalli and surrounding areas will become one of the greatest and unique mobility hubs in the world. Our track will run below the Blue Line. Baiayappanahalli will have Corridors 2 and 4. It's a busy area with space constraints. We'll have to create new infrastructure within existing systems. There'll be little flexibility in that. We'll revisit the methodology, test soil capacity and alter structure designs. The work will be technically challenging.

Class 10 girl delivers baby, activists slam teachers for 'negligence'

19-yr-old pvt firm staffer, the victim's neighbour, arrested

BENGALURU, DHNS

A 16-year-old class 10 student at a government school in north Bengaluru delivered a baby boy a week ago and the police have arrested a 19-year-old boy in this connection.

Following a complaint from the girl's mother, police registered a case under Pocso Act and arrested the boy, an employee of a private company said to be a neighbour of the victim. Sources said the pregnancy was discovered by the doctor after the girl complained of stomach pain and her mother got her checked.

Official sources from the department of school education and literacy told *DH* that they had visited the school and submitted a report to the higher authorities, recommending action against the headmaster and teachers who failed to identify physical changes in the girl, though she was regular to classes.

"Though the incident did not occur at school and even the accused is not related to the school, we have recommended action against the teachers as they failed to recognise physical changes in the girl, amounting to negligence," sources said.

Police sources said the girl was nine months pregnant and delivered a healthy baby.

"It was not a premature delivery and her pregnancy should have been visible. We were shocked to know that even parents did not recognise physical changes in her at home. Based on the mother's complaint, we have registered an FIR and arrested the accused," the sources said.

The incident has raised several questions with child rights activists demanding training for teachers on observing behavioural and physical changes among teens.

Nagasimha G Rao, child rights activist, told *DH*, "This is why we urge the government to have a child protection policy at school and regular health check-ups. It really surprises us, how can signs of pregnancy go unnoticed or ignored?".

Rao stressed on the importance of counsellors at schools. "In such cases, we should look at the trauma and pain the girl has experienced. She needs the support of a counsellor. The government must take measures to appoint counsellors at all schools to help children," he said.

Another activist said, "The relationship between students and teachers should be friendly. Then only, they can recognise such things and even children, especially girls, open up. The government must take measures to train teachers to understand physical and behavioural changes in children".

Explore folk theatre and literary works at BLR Hubba today

BENGALURU, DHNS: As part of the ongoing BLR Hubba arts and culture festival, Vishesha Hubba will spotlight Karnataka's cultural traditions on Sunday with performances that span folk theatre and contemporary interpretations of Kannada literature.

The day begins with 'Doddata: A Folk Theatre Tradition from North Karnataka', a session that traces the form's journey from ritual practice to theatrical performance. Through live demonstrations and audience interaction, the presentation features gods, demons, kings and jesters, which define the art form - at 11 am, Sabha Blr, Kamaraj Road.

Later in the evening, 'Prathibimba' brings together dance, spoken word and visual art for a tribute to poet and Jnanpith awardee Da Ra Bendre.

Performed by Janani Murali and Prathibha Ramaswamy, the production uses Bharatanatyam, dialogue and hand-drawn illustrations to reflect on the life and work of one of Kannada literature's most influential voices - at 7 pm, Yuvapatha, Viveka Auditorium, Jayanagar.

Both events are part of Vishesha Hubba, a Karnataka-focused segment of BLR Hubba that foregrounds regional languages, traditions and contemporary interpretations.

Registration for the events is open on the BLR Hubba website.

GBA elections: Final electoral rolls to be out on March 30

BENGALURU, DHNS

The final electoral roll for Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) elections will be released on March 30, according to a circular by the State Election Commission.

While releasing the draft electoral roll last week, the commission had opined that the final electoral rolls could be published by mid-March.

The commission, in a detailed timetable, asked the officials to complete the door-to-door verification by January 31.

The draft electoral rolls include 4,569,193 men, 4,320,583 women and 1,635 voters from other categories.

GBA Chief Commissioner Maheshwar Rao, on Saturday, instructed officials to prepare the voter list as per the directions of the State Election Commission and in a transparent manner.

"The officials concerned in each city corporation must personally inspect the ward boundaries and ensure that there is no confusion regarding boundaries. Voter list preparation process must be carried out lawfully and transparently," he said.

He further instructed that electoral registration officers must dedicate 2–3 hours every day exclusively to election-related work.

Special Commissioner (Elections) Ramachandran also instructed officials to expedite the work of mapping the 2002 voter list with the 2025 voter list.

"While receiving claims and objections related to the voter list, Forms 6, 7, and 8 must be properly processed. Observers, appointed by the State Election Commission for the GBA elections, must perform their duties efficiently," he said.

Doctor, accused in extortion case, attempts suicide near Soudha

BENGALURU, DHNS: High drama unfolded in front of the Vidhana Soudha on Saturday after a doctor consumed poison over alleged police harassment in an extortion case. However, the police later found that the poison was laced with juice.

Dr Nagendrappa Shirur (38), who runs a private nursing home, was arrested by the Bannerghatta police over a protest after Right-wing activist Puneeth Kerehalli was taken into custody in connection with the issue of illegal immigrants.

The police said that around 11.30 am, Nagendrappa reached near the Vidhana Soudha premises and allegedly consumed poison in full public view.

The alert police on duty noticed the act, snatched the poison bottle from him and rushed him to the Bowring and Lady Curzon Hospital for emergency treatment.

The hospital sources said Dr Nagendrappa is out of danger, and they did not find poison in his body.

A case had earlier been registered against him in connection with a protest in front of the Bannerghatta police station.

The Soladevanhalli police were in search of him in connection with a recent extortion case filed by Karibasappa, a businessman.

A police officer said that he had escaped from his house and created drama to prevent the police from taking action against him.

Dr Nagendrappa has alleged that he was subjected to sustained questioning and harassment during the course of a police investigation, which reportedly caused him severe mental distress and drove him to take the extreme step.

Based on a complaint by the Soladevanahalli police inspector, the Vidhana Soudha police have registered a case of suicide attempt.

Cop arrested for sexually harassing minor male student

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Upperpete police have arrested a 27-year-old constable on the charge of sexually harassing a male student at Freedom Park on Friday.

The accused has been identified as Y Naik, attached to the R T Nagar police station and booked under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (Pocso) Act.

A senior police officer said that the constable was on routine duty at the Freedom Park and sexually harassed a PUC student in the afternoon.

The victim revealed the incident to his mother and she then alerted Upparpet police. Acting swiftly, the police arrested the accused and produced him before a court.

The senior police officer further said departmental action would also be initiated against the accused, and further investigation is underway to ascertain the exact sequence of events and whether there were any previous complaints against him.

Sustainable development: Namma B'luru challenge awards 5 startups

BENGALURU, DHNS:: In an attempt to provide a push to startup founders focusing on sustainable development in Bengaluru, Namma Bengaluru challenge has chosen five start up companies as winners for 2026.

The winners include Carbon Craft Design, a sustainable construction company; SatiQ Concrete Manufacturer, a low-carbon concrete manufacturer; Tellus Habitat, a water filter company for making sewage water reusable for non-potable use. The other two companies focused on wastage produced by eateries.

Sunbird straws is a sustainable alternative for paper and plastic straws, made of coconut tree leaves. Go Do Good is a sustainable and safe alternative for plastic food delivery boxes.

The challenge gave Rs 25 lakh to winners to deploy their innovations across the city. Five winners were chosen out of 600 applicants.

The other notable startup companies included Padcare, manufacturing sanitary pads recycling equipment and other companies for waste management equipment and sustainable air purifiers.

Speaking in the occasion, Maheshwar Rao, commissioner of Greater Bengaluru Authority, said, "We look forward to collaborating with a few of them, especially in relation to lakes and sustainable infrastructure".

Explaining the judgement criteria, co-founder of Unboxing BLR Prashanth Prakash said, "Apart from the systematic view, we are looking at companies that have products that are replicable and scalable. We also want to recognise companies that are leveraging technology. Besides funds and exposure, they will get inputs from eminent people well versed in matters of the city".

Pavitra Shankar, managing director, Brigade Group and one of the jurors, said, "Everyone who participated showed a lot of desire for finding solutions to problems that growing cities have".

Manoj Kumar, co-founder of Social Alpha, said, "It is important we support people who are coming up with solutions".

No advance bail for Rajiv Gowda

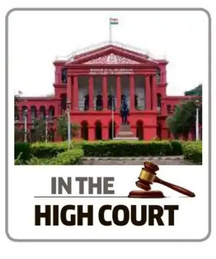
CHINTAMANI (CHIKKABALLAPUR DIST), DHNS: The second additional district and sessions court has dismissed the anticipatory bail application of Rajiv Gowda, the Congress leader accused of abusing the woman municipal commissioner of Shidlaghatta.

The arguments in the case had concluded on January 22. Senior counsel Vivek Reddy had appeared for Gowda.

Konkani film screening tomorrow

BENGALURU, DHNS: *Nagna Sathya*, a Konkani film produced by Kiranmayi Kamath and directed by Ramesh Kamath, will be screened at Pai Vista Convention Hall, South End Circle, at 5 pm on January 26. The film follows a young journalist as she investigates the death of her mother 20 years ago. For details, those interested can call 9845193432.

HC stays case against driver of luxury car with faulty silencer



BENGALURU, DHNS: The Karnataka high court has stayed proceedings against the driver of a Lamborghini Huracan, a luxury car, for faulty silencer and rash and negligent driving in Bengaluru. Justice M Nagaprasanna passed the interim order after hearing the petition filed by Chiranth, a resident of CV Raman Nagar, Bengaluru.

The Kengeri traffic police had registered a suo motu FIR for rash driving and faulty silencer against the driver of the Maharashtra registered Lamborghini car. The FIR was for offences punishable under BNS Section 281 and under Sections 120 and 177 of the Indian Motor Vehicles Act. The police had registered the FIR based on a viral video circulating on Instagram and X, which showed the car weaving through traffic on Mysuru road near Kengeri. The police said the car was roaring beyond the permitted decibel levels and being driven in a reckless manner.

It was submitted before the court that the petitioner had driven the car on December 14 and 19, 2025, which was captured and circulated in the social media. Despite the fine being taken for the offences under the provisions of the Indian Motor Vehicles Act, the crime is registered on the score that the petitioner has not changed the retrofitted silencer. The counsel for the petitioner submitted that the retrofitted silencer is now changed and there is no roaring of the vehicle anymore.

"Counsel for the petitioner submits that the retrofitted silencer is also now changed and there is no roaring of the vehicle anymore. In the light of the said document and the fine being taken, I deem it appropriate to stall further investigation vis-a-vis the petitioner, till the next date of hearing, while appropriate orders would be passed at the time of closure of the proceedings in the event it is in favour of the petitioner," Justice Nagaprasanna said in the order, while posting the matter to February 6, 2026 for further consideration.

◆ IN THE CITY ◆

GENERAL

16th National Voters Day: Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot, M Maheshwar Rao, V Anbukumar: Election Commission of India, Chief Electoral Officer, Karnataka: Town Hall, JC Road; 11 am

Presentation of 'Sri Sri Awards for Education-2026': Presence: Sri Sri Ravi Shankar Guruji, guests: Dinesh Gundu Rao, Mohandas Pai, Manoj Srivatsa: Art of Living International Centre, Kanakapura Road; 9.30 am

CULTURAL

Bharatanatyam performance: Bhumika S R and Bhuvana S R: Vidya Rao, Padmini Ravi, Aarti H N, Bhuvanesh S R to be present: Natyaradhana: Chowdiaah Memorial Hall, Vaiyali Kaval, Malleshwaram; 5 pm

'Annana Nenapu' Play: Direction - Hanu Ramasanjeeva, Pravara Theatre: Lalbagh; 5.15 pm

BLR Hubba: Cottonpet Heritage Walk at 8 am: Lokmanya Tilak Park, 8 am Music Concert: Karthik Hebbar: Bandstand Cubbon Park, Chikkapet, 8.30 am, The Army Town and Its Tales Guided Heritage Walk: St Mark's Road 10 am, Malleshwaram Hogona Historical, Cultural Walk: Srisagar CTR, Malleshwaram, 11 am Doddaata Performance: G K Kala Vedike Hubballi: Sabha, Kamaraj Road, 5.30 pm

Sur Prabhat: Vocal by Vinayak Toravi, tabla: Ravindra Yavagal, harmonium: Vyasamutri Katti: Rajguru Smriti, Karnataka Chitrakala Parishad, Kumarakrupa Road; 7 am

Invites to be published in this column should be sent to: **incitytoday@deccanherald.co.in.** Please note that hard copies will not be accepted

◆ CITY WEATHER ◆

FORECAST
Mist

TEMPERATURES

Maximum	26.3°C
Minimum	17.1°C
Rainfall (as of 8:30 am)	--
Humidity (as of 5:30 pm)	36%
Sunset (Jan 25)	6:17 pm
Sunrise (jan 26)	6:46 am
Moonrise	10:30 am
Moonset	11:30 pm

(Relevant data recorded at 5.30 pm) Source: IMD

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Election Commission of India

extends warm wishes to all its electors

on the occasion of

16th National Voters' Day Celebration

25th January 2026

Citizen at the Heart of Indian Democracy

My India My Vote

मैं भारत हूँ मेरा मत

Chief Guest

Smt. Droupadi Murmu

Hon'ble President of India

Guest of Honour

Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal

Hon'ble Union Minister of State (I/C) for Law and Justice

Programme Details

- National Voters' Day Awards
- Launch of publications:
  - 2025: A Year of Initiatives & Innovations
  - Chunav ka Parv Bihar ka Garv: A Journey: Bihar Assembly Elections 2025
- Video Screening:
  - ECI's global leadership in electoral management and democratic development

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Green light for bike taxis: Relief for riders, auto drivers cry foul

Transport bodies warn govt of 'political consequences'

ASHWIN B M
BENGALURU, DHNS

The long-standing legal battle over bike taxis in the state reached a turning point on Friday as the High Court cleared the way for two-wheelers to operate as commercial transport. While the ruling has brought a sigh of relief to thousands of gig workers and aggregators, like Ola, Uber, and Rapido, it has reignited a wave of anxiety among the city's auto rickshaw drivers, who fear their livelihoods are now on the brink of collapse.

The dispute goes back to June 2025, when the state government imposed a blanket ban on bike taxis. This ban was subsequently challenged by aggregators, leading to a division bench of the High Court comprising Chief Justice Vibhu Bakhru and Justice C M Joshi setting aside the earlier single-judge order.

The court ruled that motorcycles fall under the definition of transport vehicles under the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988. It directed the state to process registration applications for bike taxis and prohibited authorities from denying permits solely on the grounds that the vehicle is a motorcycle.

For the thousands of riders who navigate Bengaluru's notorious traffic, the verdict is a victory for the right to trade.

"Many of us took to bike taxis because there were no other jobs. The ban had pushed us to the streets," said Puneeth, a bike taxi rider. "Companies like Ola and Uber have cabs and autos, so they don't lose much. It was the individual riders who were suffering."

Shashank, a representative from Rapido, echoed this sentiment, noting that the High Court had stood by those who depend on the service for their daily bread.

The ruling has not gone down well with the auto-rickshaw community. Drivers argue that while they pay commercial taxes and follow strict regulations, bike taxis often operate with white (private) number plates, creating an uneven playing field.

Thimmaraju, an auto driver from Rajajinagar, expressed his helplessness. "We pay taxes and follow rules, yet we are losing passengers to bikes. On top of that, there are serious concerns about passenger safety, especially for women, given recent reports of harassment."

Ramegowda, president of the Sarathi Auto Drivers' Association, warned of a potential shift in the transport landscape. "If the government allows white-board vehicles to run as taxis, every auto driver might as well switch to a bike. It's becoming impossible to survive," he said.

The Federation of Karnataka State Private Transport Associations has taken a hardline stance, warning the government of political consequences.

S Nataraja Sharma, the federation's president, stated: The government must protect those who pay commercial transport taxes. The High Court did not explicitly allow white-plate vehicles for commercial use, it only said motorcycles can be registered as transport vehicles (yellow plates).

"If the government fails to regulate this, the unions will teach them a lesson in the upcoming elections. The state government is now under pressure to frame specific guidelines to regulate the sector", he added.

Until the Transport Department issues a clear framework for yellow-plate motorcycle registration, the friction between the two-wheeler riders and auto-rickshaw unions is expected to persist.

Constitution: Seminar and walkathon at Jnanabharathi on January 30

BENGALURU, DHNS: *Prajavani* and *DH*, in collaboration with the social welfare department, will organise a seminar and walkathon at Jnanabharathi, Bangalore University, from 7 am onwards on January 30 as part of the 'Constitution is Light' campaign.

CONSTITUTION IS LIGHT

A seminar will be organised at Venkatagiri auditorium, followed by a 3-km walkathon on the campus. The campaign aims to raise awareness of the importance of the Constitution.

Entry is free and registration is mandatory. Students of degree colleges affiliated to Bangalore University can participate. Students must register in advance by scanning the QR code. All registered participants will receive T-shirts and caps. For more information, call 9901918805.

SSLC preparatory exam timings revised again

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Department of School Education and Literacy has changed the timings of SSLC preparatory examinations 2 and 3, for the second time.

The department had stated that the examinations would commence at 11 am - as part of measures to prevent question paper leakage. However, a fresh Standard Operating Procedure has been issued stating that the examination would begin at 10.30 am. However, SSLC students must be present in the classroom at 9 am.

The question paper must be downloaded only by the head teachers, using their login ID and the OTP that comes to their registered mobile number, according to the SoP.

The second preparatory examination will begin on January 27 and will continue until February 2. The third preparatory examination will be held from February 23 to February 28.

Centre implemented NEP 2020 undemocratically, says Thorat

BENGALURU, DHNS: Chairman of the State Education Policy Commission (SEP), Sukhadeo Thorat, has charged that the Union government implemented the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 in an undemocratic manner, without consulting the state governments.

Speaking after inaugurating the programme 'Towards People's Policy on Education 2026—an Alternative to NEP 2020', organised by the All India Save Education Committee (AISEC) on Saturday, he said the policy was moving towards the complete centralisation of education.

"In the name of the Indian Knowledge System, irrational and unscientific curricula are being designed," he alleged.

"At least 67% of higher educational institutions have become self-financing and private. Due to escalating fees, a 22% dropout rate is being observed among economically backward sections. Consequently, universal education has become a mirage," he stated.

Jawahar Sircar, former MP and former Secretary of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, said, "The National Education Policy 2020 is a bureaucratic tool designed to implement four main objectives: centralisation, corporatisation, communalisation, and privatisation of education."

A CRPF women contingent takes part in full-dress rehearsal for the Republic Day parade in Bengaluru on Saturday. DH PHOTO/B K JANARDHAN

1,400 students to take part in R-Day cultural fete

2k police personnel deputed for security

BENGALURU, DHNS

The Bengaluru Urban district administration, the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) and the Bengaluru City Police have finalised preparations and arrangements for the Republic Day celebrations at the Field Marshal Manekshaw Parade Ground.

Close to 1,100 personnel from the CRPF, Army, city police and Tamil Nadu Police contingents will take part in the parade, along with participation from Scouts and Guides, NCC and various school students.

In addition, nearly 1,400 students will also perform in the cultural activities during the celebrations.

GBA Chief Commissioner Maheshwar Rao said that authorities are fully prepared to ensure that the celebrations proceed smoothly.

"The police and teams participating in cultural activities have been practising on the ground since January 21. Passes for the event have also been issued both online and offline," Rao said.

Elaborate security cover

The Bengaluru City Police have also made extensive security arrangements, with close to 2,000 personnel deployed on the ground to ensure safety.

"Our officials will closely monitor the situation. However, we urge citizens who are coming to witness the celebrations to arrive by 8 am since security checks may take time and VVIP movement might affect the process," said Seemant Kumar Singh, Bengaluru City Police Commissioner.

As a security measure, a one-kilometre radius around the Manekshaw Parade Ground has been declared a Temporary No Fly Zone.

Accordingly, drones, UAVs, gliders, and small or scheduled aircraft will not be allowed to fly in the area between 6 am and 1 pm on January 26.

More than 90 CCTV cameras and four baggage scanners have been installed at the venue. Ambulance services have also been arranged to respond to any emergencies. The fire safety department will be on standby to handle any untoward situations, police said.

Traffic restrictions

- Traffic will be diverted between 8.30 am and 10.30 am from the BRV Junction to the Kamaraj Road Junction (both directions) on Cubbon Road.
- Vehicles coming from Infantry Road towards Manipal Centre should move on Infantry Road – Safina Plaza – Left Turn – Main Guard Cross Road – Ali As Circle – Dispensary Road – Kamaraja Road and Dickenson Road Junction – Right Turn – KR Road and Cubbon Road Junction – Left Turn – Cubbon Road onwards to Manipal Centre Junction.
- Vehicles coming from Manipal Junction towards BRV Junction on Cubbon Road will be prohibited near Manipal Centre.
- These vehicles will take a right turn near Webbs Junction, then move on MG Road – Mayo Hall Junction – Arts and Crafts Junction – Anil Kumble Circle – Right Turn – BRV Junction, and proceed towards Central Street.
- Vehicles coming from Anil Kumble Circle towards Cubbon Road will go straight on Central Street Junction – Right Turn – Infantry Road – Safina Plaza – Left Turn – Main Guard Cross Road – Ali As Circle – Dispensary Road – Kamaraja Road and Dickenson Road Junction – Right Turn – KR Road Junction – Left Turn – Cubbon Road onwards to Manipal Centre Junction.

No Parking Zones

- Central Street from Anil Kumble Circle to Shivajinagar Bus Stand
- Cubbon Road from CTO Circle to K R Road and Cubbon Road Junction
- M G Road from Anil Kumble Circle to Queens Circle (both sides)

ED attaches properties in seat blocking, PSI job scams

'They belong to college trustees, ADGP, head constable'

BENGALURU, DHNS:

The Enforcement Directorate (ED), Bengaluru zonal office, has provisionally attached immovable properties worth Rs 19.46 crore in connection with the engineering seat blocking scam involving BMS Educational Trust.

The attached assets include one plot and two flats belonging to the trustees of the trust.

In a separate case, ED provisionally attached immovable properties worth Rs 1.53 crore under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002 in PSI recruitment scam. The attached assets include residential properties belonging to Amrit Paul (ADGP) and Sridhar H (head constable).

In the case of BMS, the ED probe is based on FIRs registered by Malleswaram and Hanumantha Nagar police in Bengaluru over alleged illegal collection of cash during engineering admissions through the Karnataka Examinations Authority (KEA). Investigators found that students were charged amounts over and above the prescribed fees.

Searches were conducted in June 2025 revealed that engineering seats in colleges run by the trust were allegedly sold through middlemen and agents.

Unaccounted cash was collected directly from students as well as through educational consultants and was not recorded in the trust's accounts.

The ED had seized Rs 1.86 crore in cash during the searches and recovered evidence indicating unaccounted collections of Rs 20.2 crore. Officials said the evidence included diary entries and WhatsApp chats, corroborated by statements from college staff, management and agents.

The investigation revealed that the illicit proceeds were used for the personal benefit of the trustees and further probe is underway, ED officials said in a press release.

In the PSI recruitment scam, ED had initiated investigation based on the FIR registered by the High Grounds Police Station and CID, Bengaluru, against various police officials and candidates for irregularities in recruitment of police sub-inspectors (PSIs) in 2021-22.

The police recruitment cell had conducted examination for filling up 545 vacancies of PSIs and a provisional list of successful candidates was published.

After the list was out, allegations of cheating and corrupt practices surfaced.

"ED investigation revealed that Amrit Paul, the then additional director general of police (recruitment), played a pivotal role in the conspiracy by facilitating unauthorized access to the strong room where OMR answer sheets were kept. He handed over keys of the almirah containing strong room keys to DySP Shanth Kumar, allowing accomplices, including Sridhar H, to tamper with the OMR sheets of undeserving candidates to ensure their selection," the ED said in a statement.

According to ED investigation, the accused collected bribes ranging from Rs 30 lakh to Rs 70 lakh per candidate.

"Illicit cash proceeds were layered under the guise of hand loans and the money was utilised for the construction of residential properties. Earlier, ED had filed a prosecution complaint in this matter. The court has already taken cognizance of the offence of money laundering as defined under sec 3 of PMLA, 2002," the statement said.

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client **M/s. Durga Developers Pvt. Ltd,** having its **Registered Office at Shivam Plaza, Kadru Diversion Road, Doranda, Ranchi-02, represented by its Director Smt. Durga Jha, and also having Branch Office at SLV Apartments, 5th Cross, Doddamma Industrial Layout, Hulimavu, Bannerghatta Road, Bengaluru 560 076** has filed **O.S.No.429/2020** on the file of the **Principal Civil Judge, Bengaluru Rural District, Bengaluru now renumbered as O.S.No.576/2021 transferred to Commercial Court against Sahadeva Krishna, deceased by his LRs Varalakshmi and others and also against Smt. N. Nagaveni** praying for execution of the **Joint Development Agreement in terms of Memorandum of Understanding dated: 04.12.2011 and 01.04.2013** and for permanent injunction restraining them from alienating the schedule property and **alternatively sought damages of Rs. 10 crores** Under if it is not available for development changed circumstances the above said MOU's they have already received substantially received substantial amount from my client and now suppression the said fact they have entered into another **Joint Development Agreement with Mrs. Aditrii Builders and Developers on 05.02.2020** and immediately my client has impleaded it in the above said proceeding and evidence is going on the said case.

My client has recently noticed that the said **Smt. Varalakshmi and Smt. Nagaveni** to defeat its right over the said property under the said Agreement suppressing the above suit and also the agreement they have got completed the construction of apartment over the schedule property and has put up an advertisement board over the same to the information of the public that apartments available for sale and they are ready for occupation. My client further state that its right the over the property of joint development is not settled and still suit is going on in Commercial Court at Bengaluru regarding the same and in addition it has it has invested huge amount on this project and inspite of the same in a high handed manner, the above said owners entered into another Joint Development Agreement and by suppression of material facts trying to sell the same to the third parties by suppression of these facts it is hereby informed to the public that the same is not available for sale and inspite of this notice if anyone enter into any agreement or purchasing the same, the same will not be binding on my client and it is at his/her risk and in addition to that it is subject to result of the said suit.

SCHEDULE

All that piece and parcel of the property bearing BBMP No.1190/85/1A, measuring on the:

East by : 61 feet 11 inches;
West by : 61 feet 3 inches;
North by : 81 feet 7 inches;
South by : 82 feet 8 inches.

and in all measuring 21,780 square feet, situated at Bisenahalli Thota, Bengaluru and bounded on the :

East by : Main Highway NH-7 Service Road;
West by : Empty (plot), Yelahanka B.B. Road;
North by : Residential Home;
South by : Temple and Rose Garden Apartment.

JANARDHANA. G, BA, LL.B., ADVOCATE
No. 44/14, 1st Floor, K. Kamaraj Road, BANGALORE - 560 042.
Mob : 9448360409
Place : Bangalore Date : 24.01.2026

PUBLIC NOTICE

Our clients are desirous of purchasing all that piece and parcel of Private Residence i.e., **A Three Bedroom – Type 3, bearing No. 401 on the Fourth floor of F Wing of Tower II (described as North Wing – Tower A in the sanctioned plan)** bearing Municipal No. 8/1-127, 2nd Phase, J.P. Nagar, Marenahalli, Ward No. 177 (old ward No. 57), Bengaluru (presently bearing **EPID No. 8430216557)** in the records of Bangalore South City Corporation of the building known as ***"Peninsula Heights"*** constructed on property bearing Municipal No. 46/1, 46/2, 47/2 and 81/1, and situated at 2nd Phase, J.P. Nagar, Marenahalli, Ward No. 177 (old ward No. 57), Bengaluru **("Said Property"),** from its present owners **Mr. Harish K M** Son of Late Mr. K.L. Manjunath and **Mrs. Shoba Harish** wife of Mr. Harish K.M. both residing at Apartment No. E002, Adarsh Palace, 47th Cross, 9th Main, Jayanagar, Bangalore–560 041 **("Owners").** Any person/s asserting any right, title, interest or claim in the Said Property or any part thereof, in any manner whatsoever or having any claim against the Said Property or the documents thereof or against the Owner or objecting to such transaction with our clients, should write to the undersigned within **Fifteen (15) days** from the date of issuance of this notice with all documentary proof on which they are basing and asserting their rights with regard to Said Property or any part thereof, after which period our clients shall proceed on the basis that there are no claims of whatsoever nature with regard to the Said Property.

SCHEDULE

A Three Bedroom – Type 3, **Private Residence** bearing No. **401** on the **Fourth** floor of **F Wing** of **Tower II** (described as North Wing – Tower A in the sanctioned plan) bearing Municipal No. 8/1-127 (presently bearing **EPID No. 8430216557)** in the records of Bangalore South City Corporation of the building known as "Peninsula Heights" constructed on property bearing Municipal No. 46/1, 46/2, 47/2 and 81/1, and situated at 2nd Phase, J.P. Nagar, Marenahalli, Ward No. 177 (old ward No. 57), Bengaluru and having a carpet area of about 242.35 square metres or 2608.65 square feet and super built-up area of about 361.38 square metres or 3890 square feet which is inclusive of proportionate share in the common area and common amenities and facilities along with exclusive right to use two (2) car parking space/s in the Basement together with corresponding undivided 0.6393% share in the land (equivalent to 1014.37 square feet) comprised in the entire property measuring in all about 1,58,659.80 square feet equivalent to 14739.87 square metres and bounded on the: **East by:** 25th Cross Road (old existing Road to Bannerghatta) **West by:** 17th Main Road (old proposed road of CITB) and portion of Municipal No. 46/1, 46/2, 47/2 and 8/1-3 and a portion of Municipal No. 46/1, 46/2, 47/2 and 8/1-4, **North by:** Property belonging to B.P.R.L **South by:** Private Property (Old No. CITB land)

The property address as per E-asthi in Form 11 A is mentioned as 57135-MARENAHALLI 2ND PHASE J P NAGAR, Peninsula heights, Flat No 401, Bengaluru, Peninsula heights Flat No 401 4th Floor F Wing Tower H 46/1 17th Main Road Marenahalli JP Nagar 2nd Phase, Near Ragigudda Temple, 560078.

Sd/- Sunitha R, Advocate,
CMS INDUSLAW,
No.101, 1st Floor, Embassy Classic,
#11, Vittal Mallya Road,
Bangalore - 560 001.
Phone No.: +91-80- 4072 6600

SOUTHERN RAILWAY
Chennai Division
E-Tender Notice

Sr. Divisional Signal and Telecommunication Engineer / I / MAS acting for and on behalf of The President of India invite E-Tenders for the work:

E-Tender No.	Name of work	Approx. Cash Value (Rs.)	Period of Completion
M-SG-2026-494-DVR_BD Dated 14.01.2026	Signal and Telecommunication Work in connection with Development of Ballast depot for increasing the ballast capacity at **Doravari Chatram (DVR)** in Chennai Division.	1,82,26, 992.17/-	06 Months
M-SG-2026-494-FRS_MAS Dated 21.01.2026	Provision of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Based Facial Recognition System (FRS) at **Chennai Central (MAS)** station in Chennai division of Southern Railway.	5,05,13,200.56/-	06 Months

The complete details of the tender can be downloaded from the e-tender portal **https://www.ireps.gov.in.**

Sr. Divisional Signal and Telecommunication Engineer / I / MAS

SOUTHERN RAILWAY

The following Corrigenda are published in IREPS Website. Firms are requested to Login to **http://www.ireps.gov.in-login>e.tender-goods & services (new)** and quote against these tenders. Manual quotations will not be entertained for these tenders. **Closing Time aor All Tenders 14:30 HOURS**

CORRIGENDUM TO TENDER NOTICE NO. E/26-2025, ITEM SL NO. 10, TENDER NO. 03255001TP, ITEM: RATE CONTRACT FOR MANUFACTURE AND SUPPLY OF MONO-BLOCK PRE-STRESSED CONCRETE LINE SLEEPER

FIELD NAME, TENDER CLOSING DATE/TIME	EXISTING: 22/01/2026 14:30	READ AS: 27/01/2026 14:30
FIELD NAME: 2. ITEM DETAILS : EXISTING		
READ AS		
S.No. 1	Consignee: Anywhere in Chennai Division of Southern Railway	215800 Nos
S.No. 2	Consignee: Anywhere in Salem Division of Southern Railway	228250 Nos
5.No. 3	Consignee: Anywhere in Palakkad Division of Southern Railway	132000 Nos
S.No. 4	Consignee: Anywhere in Thiruvananthpuram Division of Southern Railway	199200 Nos
S.No. 5	Consignee: Anywhere in Tiruchchirappalli Division of Southern Railway	156000 Nos
S.No. 6	Consignee: Anywhere in Madurai Division of Southern Railway	130800 Nos

Principal Chief Materials Manager

झारखण्ड राज्य बिवरेजेज कॉरपोरेशन लिमिटेड, राँची
(झारखण्ड सरकार का उपक्रम)
कॉर्पोरेट पहचान सं० –U51228JH2010SGC014519,
TIN No - 20520108277
E-mail :- jsbcl.jharkhand@gmail.com
उत्पाद भवन, भूतल, नवीन पुलिस केंद्र के समीप, काँके रोड़, राँची– 834008

अति अल्पकालिन ई–आमंत्रण पत्रांक सं०–JSBCL/03
दिनांक– 24.01.2026

इच्छा की अभिव्यक्ति हेतु अति अल्पकालिन ई–आमंत्रण सूचना

झारखण्ड राज्य बिवरेजेज कॉरपोरेशन लिमिटेड, राँची

गोदाम हेतु इच्छा की अभिव्यक्ति हेतु अति अल्पकालिन ई–आमंत्रण सूचना

क्र०सं०	विवरणी	अभ्युक्ति
1	इच्छा की अभिव्यक्ति के प्रपत्र को वेवसाईट **https://jharkhandtenders.gov.in** एवं **http://jsbcl.in** पर अपलोड करने की तिथि	दिनांक–25.01.2026
2	इच्छा की अभिव्यक्ति को ऑनलाईन **https://jharkhandtenders.gov.in** के माध्यम से जमा करने की प्रारंभिक तिथि	दिनांक– 26.01.2026
3	इच्छा की अभिव्यक्ति को Online रूप से जमा करने की अंतिम तिथि	दिनांक– 02.02.2026 के अपराह्न 06.00 बजे तक
4	इच्छा की अभिव्यक्ति के कागजात को भौतिक रूप से निगम मुख्यालय में जमा करने की अंतिम तिथि	दिनांक– 03.02.2026 के अपराह्न 04:00 बजे तक
5	इच्छा की अभिव्यक्ति को ऑनलाईन/ऑफलाईन माध्यम से तकनीकि बिड खोलने की तिथि	दिनांक– 04.02.2026 के अपराह्न 03:00 बजे

नोटः– (1) इच्छा की अभिव्यक्ति की विस्तृत जानकारी प्राप्त करने हेतु https://jharkhandtenders.gov.in एवं http://jsbcl.in से डाउनलोड किया जा सकता है।
(2) इच्छा की अभिव्यक्ति हेतु आवेदन ऑनलाईन https://jharkhandtenders.gov.in माध्यम से ही स्वीकार की जायेगी एवं इसकी भौतिक प्रति राँची स्थित झारखण्ड राज्य बिवरेजेज कॉरपोरेशन लिमिटेड मुख्यालय में जमा की जानी है।

ह०/– महाप्रबंधक (संचालन)
झारखण्ड राज्य बिवरेजेज कॉरपोरेशन लिमिटेड, राँची।

PR.NO.371587 Excise(25-26):D

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that, our client intends to transact with the building comprising of 2 basement floors and 5 upper floors constructed on the land bearing Khatha No 1331/38/2 comprised in old Survey No 38/2, approximately measuring 1 acre (43205 square feet) situated at Bannerghatta Road, Arakere, Bangalore South Taluk and District, from Ms Malini, Ms N Shylaja, Mr H S Chiranthan, Mr S Karthik, Ms B Chandrakala, Mr H B Gautham, Mr H M Venugopal (owners) and Mr Poonam Chand Gehlot (Developer) which is morefully described in the Schedule hereunder and hereinafter to as the "**Schedule Property**".

Any person having any subsisting claim, right, title or interest, in respect of the Schedule Property or any part thereof, in any manner including by way of sale, transfer, assignment, exchange, charge, tenancy, sub-tenancy, lease, sub-lease, license, mortgage, inheritance, share, gift, devise, lien, maintenance, easement, encumbrance, trust, covenant, possession, beneficial interest or pre-emption or under any agreement or other disposition or under any suit or award passed by any Court or Authority, arbitrator, *lis-pendens*, power of attorney, bequest, FSI, development rights, partnership, family arrangement or settlement or otherwise encumbrance of any nature howsoever ("**Claim**"), are hereby requested to respond with documentary proof to the undersigned within 15 (Fifteen) days from the date of publication of this notice, failing which, it shall be presumed that no such Claim exists and if it existed, the claimant has relinquished such Claim and/or waived their right to exercise such Claim.

SCHEDULE PROPERTY

All that piece and parcel of immovable property bearing Khatha No 1331/38/2 comprised in Survey No 38/2, measuring 43,205 square feet situated at Arakere Village, Begur-3 Hobli, Bangalore South Taluk, Bangalore, along with building constructed thereon comprising of 2 basement floors and 5 upper floors and bounded on:

East by : Esteem Enclave Apartments;
West by : Bannergatta Road;
North by : Private Property; and
South by : Esteem Enclave Apartments.

Dated this 25th day of January 2026.

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ADDRESS IT FAST Constitutional ambiguity on speech in legislature compounds problem

Do states need governors? Row in session rekindles debate

PRATHIMA NANDAKUMAR
BENGALURU, DHNS

The confrontation between the Congress government in Karnataka and Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot during the joint address to the legislature this past week, and similar confrontations in Tamil Nadu and Kerala, have revived the debate over the utility and relevance of the Lok Bhavan (previously Raj Bhavan) amid rising concerns over constitutional ambiguity, political misuse and erosion of institutional dignity.

The row erupted after Gehlot refused to read portions of the address prepared by the Cabinet, objecting to paragraphs critical of the union government, especially VB-G RAM (G) Act.

Veteran Kannada activist and former lawmaker Vatal Nagaraj feels the confrontations point to a deeper problem.

"The governor's post itself can be abolished. Raj Bhavan, with its sprawling residence, huge staff and high cost of maintenance, has become a white elephant. Also, we're witnessing frequent clashes between the governor's office and elected governments. Renaming the governor's office as Lok Bhavan does not bring it closer to the people," said Vatal, who recalled his own demand to then governor Khurshed Alam Khan to deliver his address to a joint session in Kannada, which forced him to walk out without making the speech.

Questioning the democratic legitimacy of an unelected authority scrutinising an elected government, Vatal said, "Let governor be elected like the President, and let there be a provision to recall the governor too".

> "There is a lacuna in the Constitution. It doesn't define whether the governor is bound to read out the entire speech or whether he can omit portions that are defamatory, false or unconstitutional.
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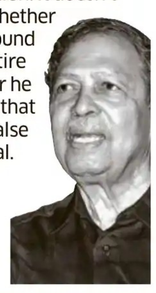
> 
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> **Santosh Hegde**
> Former judge of the Supreme Court & former Lokayukta of Karnataka

In contrast, Suresh Kumar, former law and parliamentary affairs minister and senior BJP leader, rejected calls to abolish the post, warning that doing so would weaken constitutional safeguards.

"I'm not in favour of abolishing the governor's office as there'll be no checks and balances," Kumar said.

"Today, political parties are sending not members, but only numbers to the legislature. Sometimes, bills being framed may not be in the best interest of society".

Kumar said the governor's role becomes critical when the executive itself is under scrutiny.

"If there are allegations against a chief minister, the state government will never grant sanction to prosecute. That is where the role of the governor becomes crucial," he said.

Recalling the views of late Justice Rama Jois, former governor of Bihar and Jharkhand, Kumar said Jois had called the joint address a "colonial hangover" and argued that the joint address needed to be scrapped as governors were being forced to read politically loaded speeches drafted by the Cabinet and were then attacked during debates on the motion of thanks, despite having no role in framing the content.

Lok Bhavan, the office and the residence of the governor, in Bengaluru. DH FILE PHOTO

On the joint address, Suresh Kumar questioned the attempt to compel the governor to take a political stand.

"Governor can't criticise the Centre and its policies. He's appointed by the President of India. The state government wanted to put words in the governor's mouth, attacking a central law debated and passed by parliament and assented to by the President. That would amount to subversion of the Constitution and democracy," he said.

Suresh Kumar raised the question of dissent. "If dissent notes are allowed in Cabinets and conscience votes are permitted in a democracy, why deny the governor the freedom to dissent?" he said.

Seeking to take a middle ground is Justice Santosh Hegde, former judge of the Supreme Court and former Lokayukta of Karnataka, who said the crisis stemmed from undefined constitutional boundaries rather than individual conduct.

"There is a lacuna in the Constitution," Justice Hegde said. "It doesn't define whether the governor is bound to read out the entire speech or whether he can omit portions that are defamatory, false or unconstitutional".

Justice Hegde pointed out that Article 176 mandates that the governor "shall" address the legislature, but does not clarify the manner or content.

"The Constitution is silent on whether the governor can refuse, omit or alter portions of the speech".

He said repeated confrontations across states make judicial or legislative intervention inevitable.

"The Supreme Court can clarify whether the governor is legally bound to read the speech in full or whether discretionary powers apply," Justice Hegde said.

"The court can also refer the matter back to parliament for an amendment".

The debate has gained national momentum after Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin announced that the DMK would seek an amendment to abolish the practice of the governor's joint address, following repeated confrontations with Governor R N Ravi.

The DMK has alleged a pattern of governors undermining elected governments and has spoken of consulting Kerala and Karnataka to build a broader consensus.

The Congress has accused governors in several non-BJP-ruled states of acting like "agents" of the Centre, citing delays in approving bills, public remarks critical of state governments and repeated walkouts during joint addresses.

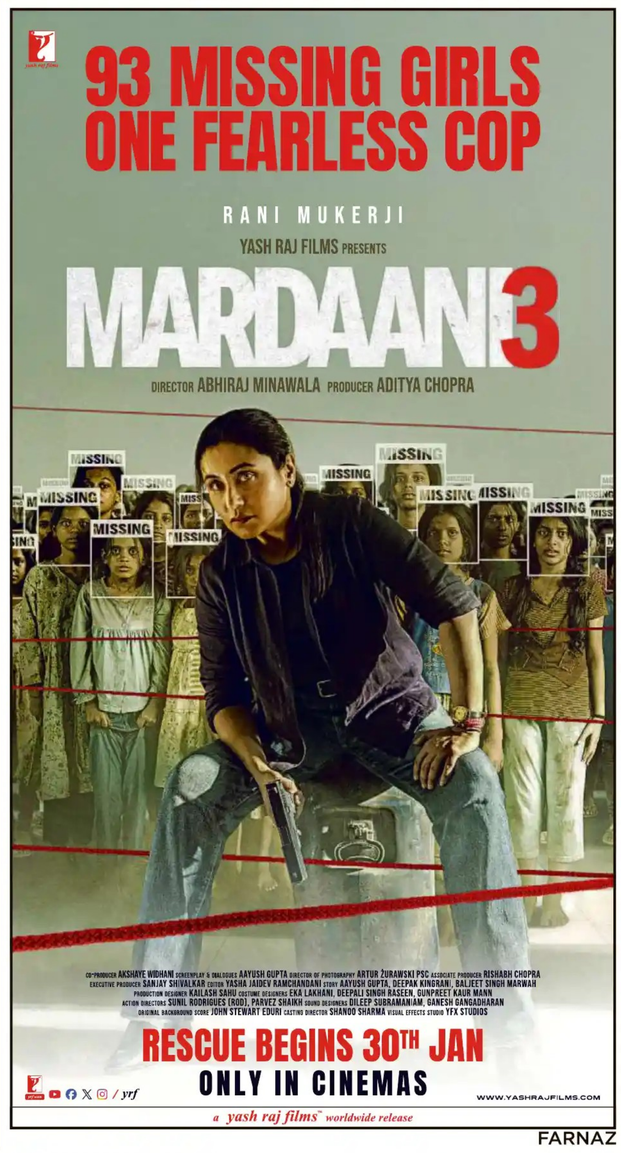
Joint session row: Guv submits report to President

BENGALURU, DHNS

Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot is learnt to have submitted a 'detailed report' to President Droupadi Murmu on developments surrounding the joint session of the legislature where he did not read the government-prepared speech and faced protests by Congress members.

The Governor's report covers January 21, when a government delegation met him, and January 22, the day of the joint session.

According to Gehlot's report, he advised the government to 'modify' paragraphs from the draft speech that contained criticism of the union government for introducing the Viksit Bharat-Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) (VB-G RAM G) Act and its impact. The report contains details on the "behaviour" of Congress members who shouted slogans and tried to block the Governor's exit from the hall. The report also has a compilation of reactions by various leaders of both Congress and BJP in the aftermath of the joint session.



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BJP making fresh bid to form govt in Manipur ahead of prez rule anniversary

Manipur, from Page 3

Members of the United People's Front and the Kuki National Organisation have indicated that they will be part of the government if a Union Territory administered by the Centre is promised for the Kuki-Zo areas.

While there is a buzz that Naga legislator Dipu Gangmei could be the chief ministerial face, there is stiff opposition to it from Meitei lawmakers.

The BJP leadership, the sources said, is keen on a Meitei face. However, the high command is unlikely to pass the baton back to Biren Singh.

The recent murder of a Meitei man who was travelling to a Kuki area to meet his Kuki wife has turned the matters sour.

"The video of his death has gone viral, and it has the potential to flame ethnic violence. So, we are all keeping a watch," the BJP legislator quoted above said.

Ethnic violence, which broke out in May 2023, between Meiteis and Kuki-Zo communities, has claimed 258 lives and displaced 60,000 across the state.

10,365 on 'sexual minorities' list; survey moots pvt sector quota

Sexual minorities, from Page 3

"It is important for even private companies to compulsory reserve 1% of jobs for sexual minorities," the report stated.

A majority of sexual minorities (56%) said their annual income was less than Rs 1 lakh even as 33% refused to divulge earnings.

"The baseline survey was commissioned to collect accurate information to help understand the status of sexual minorities, provide them with government benefits and rehabilitate them. The government will take the next steps based on the survey report," Hebbalkar said.

Establishment of a 'Transgender Welfare Board' was among the survey's objectives.

New norms ban cooked food from pvt sources for prisoners

Order follows row over 'special treatment to high-profile inmates'

BENGALURU, DHNS:

In a major move to curb VIP culture and streamline jail administration, the state prisons and correctional services department has banned all cooked food from private sources for undertrials and civil prisoners.

The new regulations were issued on Friday by Director general of police (prisons) Alok Kumar.

The order comes in the wake of recent controversies surrounding special treatment to high-profile inmates and a recent High Court observation regarding the need for uniform guidelines.

The circular explicitly prohibits cooked food being brought into prisons during admission or interviews. The department justified the restriction citing prison security, staff shortage and health concerns.

"Prisoners are already being provided adequate food, clothing and bedding in accordance with Karnataka prison rules," the order said.

Officials said the food served at Bengaluru central prison was already FSSAI certified and maintains "four-star" quality rating, leaving no room for complaints on nutritional standards.

Officials said the food served at Bengaluru central prison was already FSSAI certified and maintains "four-star" quality rating, leaving no room for complaints on nutritional standards. DH FILE PHOTO

Bedding curbs

While the department provides standard bedding, inmates may request for one additional blanket from home, subject to rigorous security check and space availability. No other bedding items such as pillows and mattresses will be entertained.

"These regulations shall be strictly enforced to ensure all undertrial prisoners are treated equally, regardless of social or financial status," Alok Kumar said.

The timing of the circular is significant as the High Court is hearing matters related to home food requests by actor Darshan and his associates accused in the Renukaswamy murder case. The court had recently stayed a trial court order allowing home food, emphasising that "no accused, big or small, is above law."

Items permitted per week

Fresh fruits: Up to 2 kg (Banana, apple, mango, guava, chikoo)
Dry fruits: Up to 0.5 kg (Almond, cashew, walnut, raisins)
Bakery/snacks: Up to 0.5 kg (Biscuits, cookies, namkeens and chips)

The department has capped the clothing allowed for prisoners to two pairs of outer clothing and two pairs of inner garments, in addition to what they wear at the time of admission. Any excess clothing found during routine searches will be confiscated.

Former prime minister & JD (S) supremo H D Deve Gowda, Union minister H D Kumaraswamy, former minister H D Revanna, JDLP leader C B Suresh Babu, Nikhil Kumaraswamy and others at the party convention, in Hassan on Saturday. DH PHOTO

Hassan convention sends strong message to opponents: HDD

HASSAN, DHNS: Over one lakh people from across the state participated in the JD(S) convention to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the party, in Hassan on Saturday.

Addressing party workers former prime minister and JD(S) supremo Deve Gowda said that the Congress held two conventions in Hassan district the past two and half years, with the objective of finishing off the JD(S). "But the party has the people's support. In order to revive and save the party and to celebrate its 25th anniversary, the Janata convention is being held in Hassan," he said.

Gowda said that the massive convention had conveyed a message that any ploy to wipe off JD(S) won't work.

"After I suffered kidney failure two months ago, I am undergoing dialysis thrice a week. I underwent dialysis on Friday and am sitting here today," he said.

T20 WC: B'desh dropped, Pak govt to take call on team's participation

T20 cup, from Page 3

"An email was sent last evening to Bangladesh Cricket Board chairman intimating him that his board didn't get back to ICC officially after the 24 hour deadline that was given to them to decide if they wanted to come to India," an ICC source told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

"The BCB did a press conference in Dhaka before officially intimating the global body which is a violation of protocol. They have been categorically told that they are being replaced. Scotland is the new team in the World Cup."

The ICC also informed all the participating member nations separately about Bangladesh being dropped from the tournament.

Bangladesh Sports Ministry advisor Asif Nazrul had advised against the national team travelling to India, citing security issues despite being given repeated assurances by the ICC.

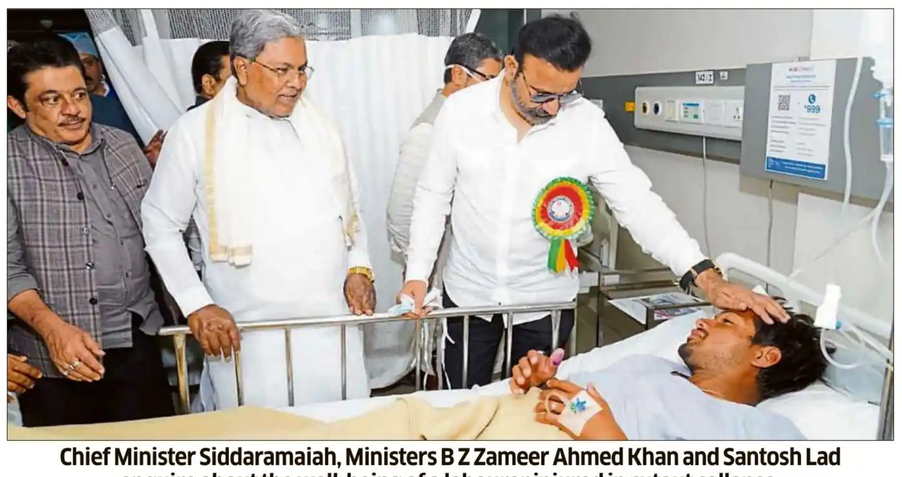
Meanwhile, addressing a press conference in Lahore, PCB chief Naqvi said the matter of Pakistan's participation in the tournament would be placed before Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif, who is currently out of the country, once he returns.

"Whether we play in the T20 World Cup or not, the decision will be taken by the government," Naqvi said. "Our PM (Shahbaz Sharif) is out of the country. When he comes, we will take advice from him. The decision by the government will be final and binding and if they say no then they (ICC) may invite any other team."

PCB was the only member nation to support Bangladesh in their demand to move their matches to Sri Lanka as 14 others voted against it.

Naqvi said Bangladesh had been unfairly treated by the ICC. "Bangladesh is a big stakeholder and they have been unfairly treated in this case. This I maintained in Wednesday's meeting as well and their stance has many factors which I will tell when the situation arrives," he said.

The PCB chairman also questioned what he termed selective decision-making by the global body, alleging that "one member nation" was exerting undue influence. "One country is dictating. When the ICC changed venues for Pakistan and India in a favour, then why was it not done for Bangladesh?" asked Naqvi.



Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Ministers B Z Zameer Ahmed Khan and Santosh Lad enquire about the well-being of a labourer injured in cutout collapse, at a private hospital in Hubballi on Saturday. DH PHOTO

3 injured as cutout collapses; CM meets victims in hospital

HUBBALLI, DHNS

Three persons, including a woman, were seriously injured after a large cutout erected for the event to mark the allotment of Slum Board houses collapsed on them, on Mantur Road in Hubballi on Saturday.

Several large cutouts of AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, Housing Minister B Z Zameer Ahmed Khan and other ministers and Congress leaders had been erected along Mantur Road and near the programme venue. The cutouts of CM Siddaramaiah and Minister Zameer Ahmed reportedly fell, trapping three persons underneath.

Soon after the incident, police shifted the injured to KMCRI for treatment. Later, all three were shifted to a private hospital. Injured are Shanta Karakatti (60), a local resident, and Shakarappa Hadapad (28) and Majunath Varnekar (33), labourers who were part of the cutout erection team.

While Shakarappa Hadapad of Byahatti suffered severe injuries and was admitted to ICU, the other two are being treated in wards.

Soon after the incident, Housing Minister B Z Zameer Ahmed Khan, Hubballi-Dharwad Police Commissioner N Shashi Kumar, DHO S M Honakeri and others visited the hospital.

CM visits

After taking part in the house distribution ceremony, CM Siddaramaiah visited the injured patients at the private hospital and enquired about their health.

The CM instructed ministers Zameer Ahmed and Santosh Lad and MLAs Prasad Abbayya and N H Konaraddi to take care of the medical expenditure of the injured.

Kharge: Modi govt troubling non-BJP state govts through governors

HUBBALLI, DHNS: Charging that the BJP-led Union government had made the Governors its puppets to trouble non-BJP state governments, All India Congress Committee (AICC) president Mallikarjun Kharge on Saturday said the governors get instructions directly from PM's office and union home minister's office not to read the speech drafted by state governments.

Kharge's remarks came two days after Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot read only 3 lines from the 122-paragraph address prepared by the government for the joint session.

"Bills are being sent back (by Governors)... This has happened even in Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Governors are troubling Congress or non-BJP governments. If asked, the governors say they have direction from the top," he said.

Kharge was addressing a massive gathering at an event to mark inauguration of 42,345 houses constructed by Karnataka Slum Development Board, under chief minister's special grants and Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana.

CM Siddaramaiah said that his government was not bankrupt, but BJP leaders were spreading false information. An amount of Rs 1.16 lakh crore has been spent for guarantee schemes in last two-and-a-half years, while development works worth thousands of crores of rupees are taken up, he said.

Protocol violation at house distribution event: BJP

HUBBALLI, DHNS: Alleging that the state government violated protocol without inviting union minister & local MP Pralhad Joshi and BJP MLAs to the houses distribution ceremony, the party held a protest here on Saturday.

The protesters said the houses were built under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY), but the government organised the function as a Congress event. They raised slogans against CM Siddaramaiah and Housing Minister Zameer Ahmed Khan. Addressing protesters, MLA Arvind Bellad said the houses were built under PMAY, but the government was projecting it as a project funded by it.

"When Somanna was housing minister, BJP government did bhoomi puja for construction of 1.3 lakh houses. But Congress halted the project after coming to power. The Congress government constructed only 42,000," he said.

CCB arrests conman in KPSC membership scam

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Central Crime Branch (CCB) police have arrested a conman in connection with a scam in which an assistant professor was allegedly cheated on the false promise of making the latter a member in the Karnataka Public Service Commission (KPSC) - by misusing the name and designation of a joint secretary in Chief Minister's Secretariat. The arrested accused has been identified as K C Jagadeesh, (42), native of Kipparvalli in Nanjanagudu taluk of Mysuru district.

A senior police officer said that Jagadeesh projected himself as having influence in government circles and used the name of M Ramaiah, Joint Secretary in the Chief Minister's Secretariat, to gain the confidence of victims. The case came to light after Ramaiah lodged a complaint alleging misuse of his name and official position to dupe people.

Investigation revealed that Jagadeesh allegedly approached Venkatesh Muttannavar, an assistant professor at a science college, and assured him of make him as a member in KPSC. Police said lakhs of rupees were collected from the complainant on this pretext.

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ಐಟಂವಾರು ದರದ ಟೆಂಡರುಗಳ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗಾಗಿ ಅರ್ಹ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರಿಂದ ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ **KW-4** ರ ರೀತಿ ದ್ವಿಲಕೋಟೆ ಪದ್ಧತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಅರ್ಹ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರು ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ **https:// kppp.karnataka.gov.in** ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳ ಟೆಂಡರ್‌ಗಾಗಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಬಹುದು.

ಕ್ರ.ಸಂ. (1) ರಿಂದ (16) ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಮಾತ್ರ]

ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪೂರ್ವಭಾವಿ ಸಭೆಯನ್ನು ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಇಂಜಿನಿಯರ್, ರವರ ಕಛೇರಿ ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ, ವಿಭಾಗ ಮಂಡ್ಯ, ರವರ ಕಛೇರಿಯಲ್ಲಿ **ದಿನಾಂಕ: 05.02.2026 ರಂದು ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11–00** ಗಂಟೆಗೆ ಕರೆಯಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ದಾಖಲಾತಿಗಳನ್ನು **ದಿನಾಂಕ 23.01.2026** ರಿಂದ ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ಮೂಲಕ ಡೌನ್‌ಲೋಡ್ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ವಿಚಾರಣೆ **ದಿನಾಂಕ; 10.02.2026 ಸಂಜೆ 4.00 ಘಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ,** ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆಯ **ದಿನಾಂಕ: 11.02.2026 ಸಂಜೆ 4.30** ಘಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ, ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ **ದಿನಾಂಕ 12.02.2026 ಸಂಜೆ 4.31** ಗಂಟೆ ನಂತರ ಅಥವಾ ನಂತರದ ಕೆಲಸದ ದಿನಗಳು, ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ **ದಿನಾಂಕ: 13.02.2026 ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11.00** ಗಂಟೆಗೆ ಅಥವಾ ನಂತರದ ಕೆಲಸದ ದಿನಗಳು. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆ ಬೆಲೆ ಇ–ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ರಂತೆ. **ಕಾಲಮಿತಿ:** ಮಳೆಗಾಲ ಸೇರಿ 6/9/11 ತಿಂಗಳು ಒಟ್ಟು 16 (ಹದಿನಾರು),

ಕ್ರ.ಸಂ. (17) ರಿಂದ (20) ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಮಾತ್ರ]

ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪೂರ್ವಭಾವಿ ಸಭೆಯನ್ನು ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಇಂಜಿನಿಯರ್, ರವರ ಕಛೇರಿ ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ ಇಲಾಖೆ, ವಿಭಾಗ ಮಂಡ್ಯ, ರವರ ಕಛೇರಿಯಲ್ಲಿ **ದಿನಾಂಕ: 29.01.2026 ರಂದು ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11–00** ಗಂಟೆಗೆ ಕರೆಯಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ದಾಖಲಾತಿಗಳನ್ನು **ದಿನಾಂಕ 23.01.2026** ರಿಂದ ಇ–ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರ್‌ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ಮೂಲಕ ಡೌನ್‌ಲೋಡ್ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ವಿಚಾರಣೆ **ದಿನಾಂಕ : 02.02.2026 ಸಂಜೆ 4.00** ಘಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ, ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ:03.02.2026 ಸಂಜೆ **4.30 ಘಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ,** ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ **ದಿನಾಂಕ 04.02.2026 ಸಂಜೆ 4.31** ಘಂಟೆ ನಂತರ ಅಥವಾ ನಂತರದ ಕೆಲಸದ ದಿನಗಳು, ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ **ದಿನಾಂಕ:05.02.2026 ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11.00**ಗಂಟೆಗೆ ಅಥವಾ ನಂತರದ ಕೆಲಸದ ದಿನಗಳು. ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆ ಬೆಲೆ ಇ–ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ರಂತೆ. ಕಾಲಮಿತಿ: ಮಳೆಗಾಲ ಸೇರಿ 4 ತಿಂಗಳು ಒಟ್ಟು 4 (ನಾಲ್ಕು),

ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳ ಪೈಕಿ ಗರಿಷ್ಠ ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ **ರೂ.900.00** ಲಕ್ಷಗಳು ಕನಿಷ್ಠ ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ **ರೂ.120.00** ಲಕ್ಷಗಳು ಇ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ. ಬೆಲೆ ಇ–ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ರಂತೆ, ಕೆಲಸಗಳ ವಿವರ, ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ, ಇ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ., ಮೊತ್ತ ಮುಂತಾದ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಳನ್ನು ಸದರಿ ಕಛೇರಿಯಿಂದ ಕಛೇರಿ ವೇಳೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದು.

ಟಿಪ್ಪಣಿ: 1. ಈ ಕೆಳಗೆ ಸಹಿ ಮಾಡಿರುವವರು ಯಾವುದೇ ಕಾರಣಗಳನ್ನು ನೀಡದೆ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆಯ ಮುಂದೂಡುವಿಕೆ /ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣವಾಗಿ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ರದ್ದುಗೊಳಿಸುವ/ಟೆಂಡರ್ ನಿರಾಕರಿಸುವ ಹಕ್ಕನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿರುತ್ತಾರೆ. **2.** ಇನ್ನು ಮುಂದೆ ಟೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಯಾವುದೇ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಗಳು ಇದ್ದಲ್ಲಿ ದಿನ ಪತ್ರಿಕೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಕಟಿಸಲಾಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲ, ಬದಲಾಗಿ ವಿದ್ಯುನ್ಮಾನ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಣೆ ವೇದಿಕೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾತ್ರ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಗಳನ್ನು ಪ್ರಕಟಿಸಲಾಗುವುದು.

ಸಹಿ/– ಕಾ.ಇಂ.,ಲೋ.ಇ.,ವಿಭಾಗ, ಮಂಡ್ಯ

RAICHUR POWER CORPORATION LTD.
(Yermarus Thermal Power Station)
(Joint venture of KPCL and BHEL)
CIN : U40101KA2009PLC049582
No: KPCL/2025-26/PS/WORK_INDENT 3884 Dated: 19.01.2026

ABSTRACT TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Two cover system) (Through e-procurement portal only)

Item wise tenders are invited through e-procurement portal **www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in** for the work of **"YTPS CHP-Refurbishment, Repair, Rectification of Ten Numbers of Non-drive Pulleys".** Last date & time for submission of bids: 31.01.2026 @ 17:30 hrs. Further details can be had from office of the **Executive Engineer (M-2)**, RPCL/ YTPS, Yermarus - 584 134, Raichur Dist., Karnataka. Mobile: +91 82775 02840.

Government of Karnataka Zilla Panchayath, Chitradurga
Panchayath Raj Engineering Division, Chitradurga-577501
Email : zped.cta@gmail.com Office phone no: 08194-222372
No:EE/PRED/CTA/TEND/2025-26 /2928 Date:23.01.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION

Executive Engineer, Pachayath Raj Engineering Division, chitradurga has invites works tender under Standard tender document under various head of account grant for 06 works (Indent No: 23522,23527,23537,23540,23546,23542 for the Estimated Cost Minimum Rs.20.00 lakhs Maximum 100.00 lakhs Total Rs:350 Lakhs. Further information obtained from the office during the office hours or any quarries contact (support@eprochelpdesk.com) or KPPP Helpdesk Phone No: tel: 09240214000, or 09240214000 this office Telephone no. 08194-222372 at office of the Executive Engineer, P.R.E. Division,Chitradurga as dates below:-

(1) Last Date for information any quarries Date: 07.02.2026 : Time : 11.00 **(2)** Last Date for Submitting the tender Date: 09.02.2026 : Time : 16.00 **(3)** Last Date of Opening the Technical Bid Date: 10.02.2026 : Time : 16.01 **(4)** Last Date of Opening the Financial Bid Date: 11.02.2026 : Time : 16.02

Further any quarries for tender contact (support@eprochelpdesk.com) or KPPP Helpdesk Phone No: tel: 09240214000, or 09240214000 or this Phone no.08194-222372 or Executive Engineer, P.R.E.Division, Chitradurga in office hours.

RO.No.623:DIPR/CTA/ KSMCA/2025-26

Sd/- Executive Engineer P.R.E. Division, Chitradurga

NEW CHAPTER Secretariat buildings to turn into Yuge Yugeen Bharat Nat'l Museum

South Block's last salute

KALYAN RAY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Republic Day parade heralds the end of North and South Blocks as seats of power.

When the horses of the 61st Cavalry lead the Presidential cavalcade on the morning of January 26, many among the audience might not realise that it would be a swansong for the South Block, which houses the Defence and External Affairs Ministries, as well as the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

This will be the last time the occupants of the historic building play the central role in shaping the contours of the Republic Day parade, linked to India's present and future policies.

The process of shifting the Defence Ministry — the last occupant of the South Block — will begin a few days after January 29's Beating Retreat ceremony, while the armed forces — the Army and the Navy — may be given some more months for the move, as the process involves their equipment as well.

Of the Big Four sitting atop the Raisina Hills, the Ministries of Home Affairs and Finance have already shifted out of the North Block, while almost the entire External Affairs Ministry and the PMO have vacated the South Block.

After a century, the curtains are coming down on the North and South Blocks, which will be converted into the Yuge Yugeen Bharat National Museum.

The history

The British inaugurated the Secretariat — comprising the two magnificent buildings — officially in 1931. The two administrative blocks had already begun functioning in 1926.

According to historian Swapna Liddle, work on the Government House — present-day Rashtrapati Bhavan — and the two secretariat buildings began simultaneously, but a delay in the supply of red sandstone from Dholpur led to the limited raw material being diverted to the construction of the Secretariat at the cost of Government House.

"As a result, work on the Secretariat progressed well, and several departments started moving into the buildings in 1925. By November 1926, the Secretariat was fully functional within its new premises, even though the domes were yet to be built. The buildings were finally completed only in 1930," she wrote.

The two blocks were constructed as part of the rebuilding of a grand new city in Delhi after the British government decided to shift the national capital out of Kolkata — then Calcutta — following the massive political unrest triggered by the Bengal Partition.

Architects Edwin Landseer Lutyens and Herbert Baker toyed with various ideas to create the new seat of power, some of which — including extending the present-day Kartavya Path to Jama Masjid and having palaces of Maharajas on both sides of the central boulevard — were rejected. However, the idea of two grand secretariat buildings on both sides of the Government House received a nod.

The architects chose to widely use sun-breakers (chhajja), latticed windows (jaali), and domes (chhatri) to give the buildings an external semblance of Indianness.

The engineering

The construction was spearheaded by several Indian contractors. Among them were Sobha Singh, father of journalist and author Khushwant Singh, who got the contract to build the South Block. His friend Basakha Singh received the contract for the North Block.

"In front of our shack ran a narrow-gauge railway track from the village of Badarpur, about 12 miles south of Connaught Circus. It had been laid to bring stone, gravel and rubble from Badarpur to the building site," Khushwant wrote in his autobiography "Truth, Love and a Little Malice".

Huge sheds housing stone-cutting machines and masons sculpting stones into patterns were set up in front of his house. On Sundays, once the railway coaches emptied the materials in the sheds, railway officials used to give children a free ride to Connaught Circus and back.

Khuswant said his father's first task was to carry two foundation stones, laid by King George V and Queen Mary in 1911 after the coronation durbar, to the Raisina Hills. It was done at night. "He hired a bullock-cart, packed the stones in it and rode on his bicycle alongside through the city suburbs in the light of Petromax lamps, and implanted the two stones of what was to become the capital of India," he wrote.

The legacy

The two blocks seamlessly transitioned into the seat of power in Independent India in 1947. They remained silent witnesses to modern India's changing history: from decades of Congress rule to the imposition of Emergency to the rise of Hindutva politics.

The strategy behind India's most emphatic military victory in 1971 was scripted inside the high-ceiling walls of the South Block. On the other side of the road, then finance minister Manmohan Singh crafted a historic budget, maintaining great secrecy till he concluded his 1991 speech in Parliament, quoting Victor Hugo: "No power on earth can stop an idea whose time has come."

From the implementation of the Mandal Commission's report and the Babri Masjid demolition to the heli-dropping of troops on the Siachen glacier and countering Pakistan's misadventure into Kargil, lights burned late into the night in the North and South Block offices on numerous occasions.

Even the sprawling new museum may fall short of space in trying to keep all the nuggets of history buried inside the corridors of power.

STOREYED STORIES

- North and South Block buildings began to be built in 1925, were completed in 1930
- However, officials had begun functioning from there by end-1926
- Architects widely used sun-breakers, latticed windows, domes to give them an Indian look from the outside
- After Independence, they witnessed Congress rule, imposition of Emergency, rise of Hindutva politics
- Several pivotal decisions, from social to fiscal to military, were taken within them

India inking trade deals to boost youth employment: PM

NEW DELHI, DHNS

Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses the Rozgar Mela virtually. PTI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday said India was inking trade and mobility agreements with multiple nations to create new opportunities for its youth at home and abroad, highlighting the government's focus on employment generation and global engagement.

He was addressing the 18th Rozgar Mela virtually, where he also distributed more than 61,000 appointment letters to youngsters newly recruited across various government departments.

Modi also said that as one of the youngest countries in the world, India must leverage its demographic advantage by creating pathways to employment that extend beyond domestic borders.

According to official statements and government releases, the Rozgar Mela was organised across 45 locations nationwide, with beneficiaries joining ministries and departments including Home Affairs, Health and Family Welfare, Financial Services, and Higher Education.

Since the initiative's inception, more than 11 lakh appointment letters have been issued through successive rounds of the employment fair.

The prime minister also touched on India's broader economic growth narrative, highlighting large investments in modern infrastructure that increased jobs in construction and allied sectors.

He also pointed to the expansion of India's startup ecosystem.

Shah switches to election mode on 'UP Diwas'

SANJAY PANDEY
LUCKNOW, DHNS

Though the next Assembly election in Uttar Pradesh is still two years away, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Saturday virtually launched his party's election campaign, showcasing what he termed the all-round development of the state, and appealed to the people to re-elect the party in the next Assembly polls.

Addressing a gathering on the occasion of UP Day, Shah said that dynastic politics could never ensure the development of the state. "It can only be done by the BJP," he added.

The minister highlighted the various projects launched in the state in the past few years and said that the BJP government had ended corruption and ensured the welfare of every section of society.

"Uttar Pradesh is the engine of India's development.... It is the soul of the country," he said.

Shah said that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath had implemented pro-people projects in the state and helped the state come out of the 'bimaru' (sick) state bracket.

Ex-Congress leader calls Rahul 'coward'

NEW DELHI, PTI

Former Congress leader Shakeel Ahmad on Saturday called Rahul Gandhi a 'darpok' (coward) and an insecure leader and claimed he is only promoting young leaders who sing his paeans in the party.

Ahmad, who has been a former union minister and a party general secretary, had quit the Congress after the Bihar assembly elections in 2025. He has been a three-time MLA and twice an MP from Bihar.

He said Gandhi finds himself uncomfortable in the presence of senior leaders who have a public standing and is thus promoting only those who have no base. Calling Gandhi "dictatorial" and "non-democratic", Ahmad claimed he does not listen to senior colleagues in the Congress and is "convinced that the party cannot go below the number two position due to its national presence".

Noting that Rahul Gandhi lost Amethi when he was the Congress president, Ahmad claimed that he could not even win the seat once nurtured by his forefathers and family due to his attitude.

While former Congress president Sonia Gandhi "converted Rajiv Gandhi's Congress and that of Narasimha Rao and Sitaram Kesri as her own, Rahul Gandhi failed to convert even Sonia Gandhi's Congress into his own," Ahmad told PTI.

"Rahul Gandhi is a coward and an insecure person. He does not get that 'boss feeling' before anyone who is senior to him or has a big public support. He is uncomfortable with any such person and is thus dictatorial and not democratic," Ahmad said.

Seizing on Ahmad's remarks, the BJP said that they have "exposed" Gandhi.

Ex-UP minister quits Congress

In a setback to the Congress, ahead of UP Assembly polls, senior party leader and former minister Naseemuddin Siddique resigned from the primary membership of the party along with dozens of his supporters.

EC to display voter discrepancy list after TMC flak

Abhishek questions poll panel's handling of SIR

KOLKATA, DHNS

Abhishek Banerjee

The Trinamool Congress on Saturday questioned the credibility of the software used by the Election Commission (EC) for the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls in West Bengal, criticising the poll panel for delaying the display of voter lists flagged for "logical discrepancies" despite a Supreme Court order.

"What exactly is the EC trying to hide?" Trinamool general secretary Abhishek Banerjee posted on X, referring to the EC's failure to comply with the January 19 Supreme Court directive within the stipulated time. "Is the @ECISVEEP looking for LOGIC or hiding the DISCREPANCIES?" he wrote.

The Supreme Court had directed the EC to publish lists of voters flagged for logical discrepancies, as well as those categorised as "unmapped" — voters whose names or parental details could not be matched with the 2002 electoral rolls.

Following the order, the EC on January 21 wrote to the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) of West Bengal, setting January 24 as the deadline for displaying the lists at gram panchayat bhavans, block and taluka offices, and ward offices in urban areas.

However, officials cited delays in providing Booth Level Officers (BLOs) with the required software, resulting in late compliance by the CEO's office in Kolkata.

"The same software that allegedly analysed over seven crore enumeration forms and detected 'logical discrepancies' within an hour on December 16 now seems to have lost its logic, speed and credibility," Abhishek said, referring to the publication of the draft electoral rolls after the enumeration phase ended.

Sources said the lists would be displayed across the state from Sunday.

SIR rollout in remaining states soon: CEC

NEW DELHI, DHNS: Chief Election Commissioner Gyanesh Kumar on Saturday said the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls is presently being conducted "smoothly" in 12 states and Union Territories, and it will be rolled out in the remaining states "soon".

In his message on the eve of the Election Commission's foundation day, also celebrated as National Voters' Day, he said the SIR was initiated as pure electoral rolls are the "bedrock of democracy".

"This exercise has been successfully completed in Bihar and is presently being smoothly conducted in 12 states and Union Territories...It will soon be rolled out in the remaining states as well," he said. A 'special revision' of electoral rolls is separately underway in Assam, he said.

Parties, people want error-free voter list: Kerala CEO

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

People and parties want an error-free voter list, but they might not have thought that the pursuit of this through the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) could be "a bit more cumbersome than expected" compared to other electoral-roll revision exercises, though efforts have been made to make it easier for them, Kerala Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Dr Rathan U Kelkar has said.

Though hearing notices have been issued to around 19.5 lakh of 2.54 crore voters who found their names in the draft rolls in Kerala, he told *DH*, all of them might not have to appear before officials if the "errors" in enumeration forms were minor and could be rectified without their appearance.

He said parties were also actively supporting the entire SIR activity, with Booth Level Agents going to houses and helping voters get documents to ensure that new electors were enrolled ahead of the Assembly elections. Parties were also asking EC to hold more camps to enrol new voters, he said.

With allegations being levelled around electoral rolls after the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, Kelkar said, "People, parties, and media all wanted a pure electoral roll, free from all defects. The SIR is a way to actually sanitise the electoral rolls. The process being followed is more intensive than what happened earlier."

Referring to some objections raised to the SIR, he said, "People probably did not have an idea that this would be a little bit more cumbersome than normal."

On the exercise in Kerala, he said only those who could not link their names with the 2002 voter list faced some trouble in the form of notices.

He also said voters in Kerala would not face any trouble in obtaining documents needed to prove their eligibility even in interior tribal hamlets, as almost everyone in the state had three or four records identified by the EC.

Medha Patkar acquitted in defamation case filed by Delhi L-G

NEW DELHI, PTI: A court on Saturday acquitted social activist Medha Patkar in a criminal defamation case filed by Delhi L-G V K Saxena, saying the prosecution failed to prove that she made the alleged defamatory statements during a 2006 television programme.

Medha Patkar

The complaint was filed by Saxena, then president of the National Council for Civil Liberties, alleging that Patkar had defamed him.

The Judicial Magistrate First Class, while hearing the case, said the complainant had failed to produce legally admissible evidence to establish that Patkar had made the impugned statements.

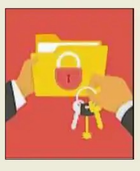
According to the complaint, Patkar had allegedly claimed during the programme that Saxena and his NGO had received civil contracts connected with the Sardar Sarovar project, an allegation Saxena denied and termed defamatory.

DATA BREACH

Login credentials of 149 million accounts leaked: Report

NEW DELHI, PTI

Login credentials, including usernames and passwords, of over 149 million accounts of internet firms, including Gmail, Instagram, and Netflix, have allegedly been leaked, a report published by ExpressVPN said.



The report published by cybersecurity researcher Jeremiah Fowler claims that the publicly exposed data includes 48 million accounts on Gmail, 4 million on Yahoo, 17 million on Facebook, 6.5 million on Instagram, 3.4 million on Netflix, etc.

"The publicly exposed database was not password-protected or encrypted. It contained 149,404,754 unique logins and passwords, totalling a massive 96 GB of raw credential data. In a limited sampling of the exposed documents, I saw thousands of files that included emails, usernames, passwords, and the URL links to the login or authorisation for the accounts," Fowler said in the report.

Email queries to major firms named in the report did not elicit any immediate reply.

Fowler said the database was publicly accessible, allowing anyone who discovered it to potentially access the credentials of millions of individuals.

Financial services accounts, crypto wallets or trading accounts, banking and credit card logins also appeared in the limited sample of records that the cybersecurity researcher claims to have reviewed.

He said a serious concern was the presence of credentials associated with '.gov' domains from numerous countries. "While not every government-linked account grants access to sensitive systems, even limited access could have serious implications depending on the role and permissions of the compromised user.

"Exposed government credentials could be potentially used for targeted spear-phishing, impersonation, or as an entry point into government networks," he said.

DMK will win the second consecutive term: Stalin

CHENNAI, DHNS: Notwithstanding a three-cornered contest, Chief Minister M K Stalin on Saturday asserted that the DMK government led by him would return to power for a historic second consecutive term after the April-May assembly elections. Stalin's DMK is pitted against a resurgent NDA led by the AIADMK and actor Vijay's TVK.

Replying to the Governor's address in the Assembly, which was boycotted by the AIADMK and BJP, said his government has put Tamil Nadu on the path of growth and development and claimed that other states in the country are looking up to Tamil Nadu.

No govt interference, 5 contractors are BRS leaders' kin: T'gana DyCM on Naini coal block row

S N V SUDHIR
HYDERABAD, DHNS

With Naini coal block tenders episode has been generating significant heat in Telangana politics, Deputy Chief Minister Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka said on Saturday that neither tenders nor tender-related files of the Singareni Collieries Company Ltd (SCCL) come to him or the state government, and that there was no scope for political interference.

Referring specifically to the now-withdrawn Naini coal block contract tender, he said certain media reports falsely claimed that making site inspection mandatory before bidding was a condition he introduced, and that such a rule did not exist anywhere else in the country.

MALLU BHATTI VIKRAMARKAN
Telangana DyCM

"SCCL has an independent Board with senior officers, which functioning autonomously and makes decisions transparently as per established rules and procedures

He presented documentary evidence showing that this condition existed in 2018, 2021, and 2023 in Singareni tender documents prepared by the CMPDIL, a subsidiary of Coal India, and also followed by the NMDC, IITs, IIMs, Finance and Defence Departments, Gujarat PSUs, and several other organisations across the country. He added that the CMPDIL clearly mandated site inspection in tender norms recommended to SCCL, and it had been following this rule since 2018.

The claim that this rule was newly introduced after the Congress came to power was entirely false, he said.

On the contrary, the DyCM said, the company mentioned — Shodha Constructions Private Limited — was headed by Deepti Reddy, the daughter of former BRS MLA Kandala Upender Reddy. He also claimed that five major contractors operating across Singareni were relatives or close associates of BRS leaders.

He also rejected allegations by BRS leader Harish Rao that handing over diesel supply to contractors had opened doors to another scam, saying that this system was introduced in 2022, during the BRS regime.

5 booked for 'forcing' Hindu girl to wear 'burqa' in UP

LUCKNOW, DHNS: Uttar Pradesh police have registered a case against five Muslim girls for allegedly 'forcing' a Hindu girl to wear a 'burqa' in Moradabad.

According to police sources, the case was registered after the girl's brother filed a complaint. The victim is a Class 12 student and had come into contact with the Muslim girls at a coaching institute. In his complaint, the brother also alleged that attempts were made to 'lure' her into accepting Islam.

The matter came to light after a video purportedly showing the Muslim girls trying to make the Hindu girl wear a 'burqa' went viral.

SHIFTING WORLD ORDER New Delhi cautious as US prez's peace body challenges UN role

India faces a stark choice on Trump's Board of Peace

R KANNAN

"To be, or not to be, that is the question," wrote Shakespeare about Prince Hamlet's dilemma. India's predicament in accepting President Donald Trump's invitation to his "Board of Peace" is no less. Prince Hamlet justifies his wish to end this life, posing the question: "For who would bear the whips and scorns of time, th' oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely?" If India rejects the invitation, will it risk inviting Trump's "proud man's contumely"? Already, the president has repeatedly claimed that he was behind the recent ceasefire between India and Pakistan.

While Pakistan has profusely thanked Trump and even "nominated" him for the Nobel Peace Prize, India has denied any US role. Islamabad has also joined the board.

Earlier, on November 17, 2025, the UN Security Council, in Resolution 2803, endorsed Trump's board "as a transitional administration with international legal personality that will set the framework, and coordinate funding for, the redevelopment of Gaza". However, the proposed charter of the board reportedly seeks to "secure enduring peace in areas affected or threatened by conflict".

Trump's September 29, 2025, 20-point roadmap to peace in Gaza envisages a "Board of Peace", an umbrella body made up of tens of select world leaders from a "distinguished group of nations", ranging from Albania to the Vatican, and permanently chaired by Trump himself, to oversee the next steps to turn Gaza into a "deradicalised terror-free zone", govern and rebuild Gaza. In his invitation letter dated January 18, 2026, Trump boasted of his board as "the most impressive and consequential board ever assembled, which will be established as a new International Organisation and Transitional Governing Administration". On January 20, 2026, when asked whether the board would replace the UN, Trump ominously said: "It might." Elaborating on the board's sweeping goals, Trump told a packed hall at the World Economic Forum in Davos, which hung on his every word: "Once this Board is completely formed, we can do pretty much whatever we want to do and we'll do it in conjunction with the United Nations."

The board is not limited to Gaza, and its task is not only to "solidify peace in the Middle East" but also to "embark on a bold new approach to resolving global conflict!" France's Emmanuel Macron has said that the board bypasses multilateralism and seeks to undermine the "principles and structure of the United Nations". Slovenia's Prime Minister Robert Golob said he had declined the invitation because the body "dangerously interferes with the broader international order". Norway and Sweden have also turned down the invitation. Some 20 countries, mostly Arab or Islamic, have reportedly accepted it. Russia, China and India have yet to make up their minds.

Since his second arrival at the White House in January 2025, the world, as depicted by Trump, increasingly resembles the interwar years of Mussolini's Italy, Tojo's Japan, Hitler's Germany and Stalin's Soviet Union. As Canada's Prime Minister, Mark Carney, obliquely noted at Davos about the Trump world order: "That the rules-based order is fading. That the strong do what they can, and the weak suffer what they must." He warned: "The middle powers must act together because if you are not at the table, we're on the menu." Carney received a standing ovation for his homily and, the following day, was ticked off by Trump at Davos.

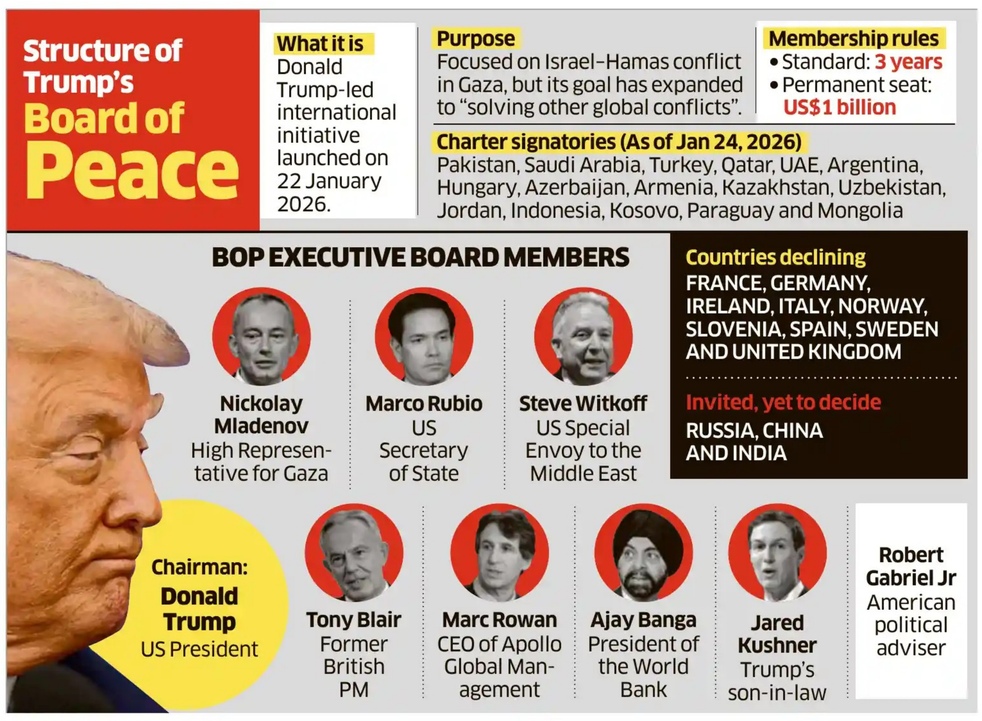
Is the situation so dire? President Trump himself has said that only his own sense of "morality" and his "mind" can set limits on his freedom of action. Despite this bravado, there has been pushback from China and the EU, and a chastened Trump has quickly retraced his steps on tariffs and, more recently, on the use of force to take Greenland. North Korea remains beyond Trump's reach, and a peace deal between Ukraine and Russia has proven elusive even for him.

Yet, a ceasefire after two years of Israeli retribution against Hamas for its raid into Israel on October 7, 2023 — which had turned Gaza into rubble, left Gazans homeless and taken tens of thousands of Palestinian lives — must be squarely credited to the maverick president. On October 10, 2025, when the ceasefire came into effect, Gazans and the world heaved a huge sigh of relief. In his second avatar, President Trump had arrived. But the United Nations, already on the margins, was further pushed towards irrelevance by Trump's role as the world's chief peacemaker.

Trump's disdain for BRICS is well known. Is the board an effort to create a smaller but more effective body of mostly yes-saying countries, as opposed to the UN, which has been in stasis since Russia's invasion of Ukraine? The contours of the board and its modalities remain unknown. All that is known is that membership lasts for three years, while permanent membership will cost $1 billion. Despite the misgivings the board has generated, it must be given a chance, if not for anything else, then for Gaza.

While India can follow China and Russia's lead in accepting or rejecting the invitation, one should bear in mind that the only thing consistent about Trump is his inconsistency. There is thus no need to fret about the permanence of this board or the damage it might do to the established world order. Even the Americans needed a UN resolution to legitimise the board, for, despite all its shortcomings, no forum can ever mirror the UN's representative character or the legitimacy it can confer on an international initiative.

(The author served with the UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs for nearly three decades in several capacities, including as a senior political official)


Structure of Trump's Board of Peace
What it is
Donald Trump-led international initiative launched on 22 January 2026.
Purpose
Focused on Israel-Hamas conflict in Gaza, but its goal has expanded to "solving other global conflicts".
Membership rules
• Standard: 3 years
• Permanent seat: US$1 billion
Charter signatories (As of Jan 24, 2026)
Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Qatar, UAE, Argentina, Hungary, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Jordan, Indonesia, Kosovo, Paraguay and Mongolia
BOP EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS
Nickolay Mladenov
High Representative for Gaza
Marco Rubio
US Secretary of State
Steve Witkoff
US Special Envoy to the Middle East
Countries declining
FRANCE, GERMANY, IRELAND, ITALY, NORWAY, SLOVENIA, SPAIN, SWEDEN AND UNITED KINGDOM
Invited, yet to decide
RUSSIA, CHINA AND INDIA
Chairman:
Donald Trump
US President
Tony Blair
Former British PM
Marc Rowan
CEO of Apollo Global Management
Ajay Banga
President of the World Bank
Jared Kushner
Trump's son-in-law
Robert Gabriel Jr
American political adviser

WORLD AT A GLANCE

A man is detained by federal law enforcement near the site where authorities say another man was shot by federal agents earlier on Saturday in Minneapolis. AFP

'Armed' man killed in Minneapolis during immigration crackdown

▸ A man shot by federal agents in Minneapolis on Saturday has died, local and federal officials said, in the second fatal shooting involving federal law enforcement in the city this month amid an expanded immigration enforcement operation, Reuters reports from Minneapolis.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) said the man was armed with a handgun and two magazines and "violently resisted" attempts to disarm him during a "targeted operation in Minneapolis against an illegal alien wanted for violent assault." Fearing for their safety, a federal agent fired defensive shots, DHS said. Medics immediately tried to aid the man, who was pronounced dead at the scene. Video circulating on social media and shown on cable news appeared to show men wearing tactical gear wrestling with a man on a snow-covered street before several shots were heard, and the individual fell to the ground. Minnesota Governor Tim Walz condemned the latest shooting as "horrific" and called for an end to the Trump administration's immigration enforcement operations in the state, urging the withdrawal of what he described as "violent, untrained officers."

China military officials under probe

▸ Top Chinese military leaders Zhang Youxia and Liu Zhenli have been placed under investigation for suspected serious violations of the ruling Communist Party's discipline and laws, PTI reports from Beijing.

Zhang is the Vice Chairman of the powerful Central Military Commission (CMC), the overall high command of the Chinese military headed by President Xi Jinping. Liu is a member of the CMC.

The probe against them, especially Zhang, the highest-ranking military official, has come as a rude shock in the Chinese military establishment, raising questions about loyalty, discipline and internal power struggles. Dozens of senior People's Liberation Army officers have been sacked or punished under an intensified anti-corruption campaign carried out by Xi since he took power in 2012.

A plane takes off from Nashville International Airport amid heavy snowfall on Saturday. Over 10,000 flights across the US were cancelled as a monster storm started to wreak havoc across much of the country. AFP

Iran issues fresh warning against US

▸ Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard, a force which was key in putting down recent nationwide protests in a crackdown that left thousands dead, is "more ready than ever, finger on the trigger," its commander said Saturday, as American warships headed toward the Middle East, AP/PTI reports from Dubai.

Nournews, a news outlet close to Iran's Supreme National Security Council, reported on its Telegram channel that the commander, Gen. Mohammad Pakpour, warned the US and Israel "to avoid any miscalculation." "The Islamic Revolutionary Guards and dear Iran stand more ready than ever, finger on the trigger, to execute the orders and directives of the Commander-in-Chief," Nournews quoted Pakpour as saying.

Indian among 4 dead in US shooting

▸ An Indian national was among the victims of a shooting incident linked to an alleged family dispute in the US state of Georgia, according to the Indian mission in Atlanta, PTI reports from New York.

The shooting left four people dead on Friday while three children were inside the home during the incident in Lawrenceville city, local media reported. The Consulate General of India in Atlanta, expressing grief over the shooting, said the alleged shooter has been arrested and all possible assistance was being extended to the bereaved family. "We are deeply grieved by a tragic shooting incident linked to an alleged family dispute, in which an Indian national was among the victims.

The alleged shooter has been arrested.

'Big step' in Russia-Ukraine talks: US official

ABU DHABI, AFP: Ukraine and Russia agreed on Saturday to hold a second round of US-brokered direct peace talks next weekend after a two-day meeting in Abu Dhabi, despite Ukrainian complaints negotiations were undermined by a barrage of deadly strikes.

The trilateral talks in the UAE will resume on February 1, a US official said, adding: "I think getting everyone together was a big step.

"I think it's a confirmation of the fact that, number one, a lot of progress has been made to date in really defining the details needed to get to a conclusion."

Russian and Ukrainian negotiators are last known to have met face-to-face in Istanbul last summer, in talks that ended only in deals to exchange captured soldiers.

This week was the first time they have faced each other to talk about a plan being pushed by US President Donald Trump to end the nearly four-year war.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said "a lot was discussed, and it is important that the conversations were constructive".

Trump threatens 100% tariff on Canada over China overtures

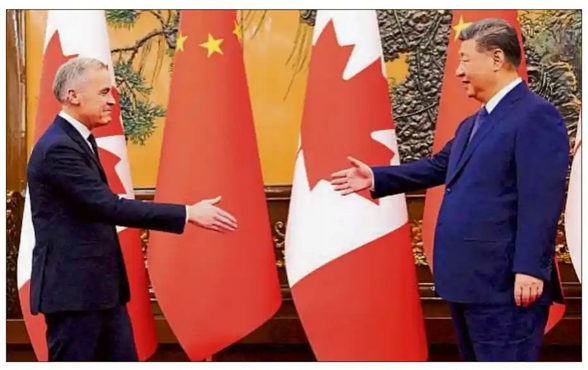
Warning follows Ottawa's Beijing outreach and Davos remarks

WASHINGTON, REUTERS

US President Donald Trump on Saturday said he would impose a 100% tariff on Canada if it makes a trade deal with China, warning Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney that such an agreement would endanger his country.

"China will eat Canada alive, completely devour it, including the destruction of their businesses, social fabric, and general way of life," Trump wrote on Truth Social. "If Canada makes a deal with China, it will immediately be hit with a 100% tariff against all Canadian goods and products coming into the US."

Carney, during a recent visit to China, called the Asian superpower a "reliable and predictable partner" and, at Davos, encouraged European leaders to seek investment from the world's second-largest economy.



Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney meets with President of China Xi Jinping in Beijing. REUTERS FILE

Trump suggested that China would try to use Canada to evade US tariffs. "If Governor Carney thinks he is going to make Canada a 'drop-off port' for China to send goods and products into the United States, he is sorely mistaken," he said.

Tensions between the US and its northern neighbour have grown in recent days.

Trump on Thursday withdrew an invitation for Canada to join his Board of Peace initiative aimed at resolving global conflicts. The about-face followed Carney's speech at the World Economic Forum in Davos, where he openly decried powerful nations using economic integration as a weapon and tariffs as leverage.

DONALD TRUMP
US President

"If Canada makes a deal with China, it will immediately be hit with a 100% tariff against all Canadian goods and products coming into the US.

US defence strategy tells allies to handle their own security

WASHINGTON, AP/PTI

The Pentagon released a priority-shifting National Defence Strategy late on Friday that chastised US allies to take control of their own security and reasserted the Trump administration's focus on dominance in the Western Hemisphere above a longtime goal of countering China.

The 34-page document, the first since 2022, was highly political for a military blueprint, criticising partners from Europe to Asia for relying on previous US administrations to subsidise their defence.

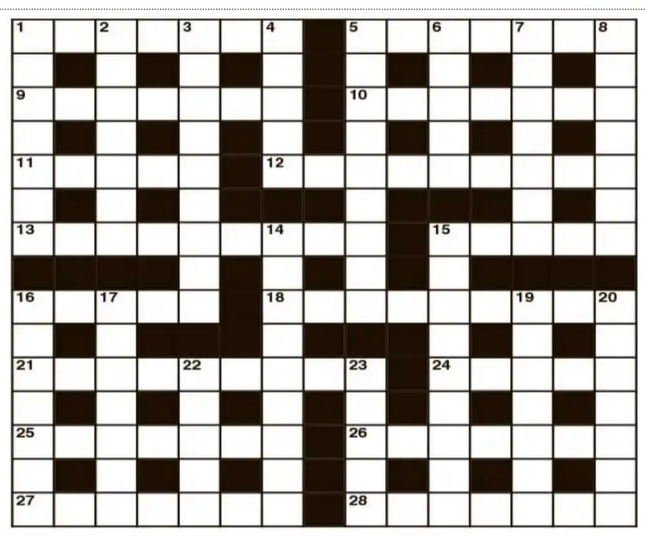
It called for "a sharp shift — in approach, focus, and tone." That translated to a blunt assessment that allies would take on more of the burden countering nations from Russia to North Korea. "For too long, the US Government neglected — even rejected — putting Americans and their concrete interests first," read the opening sentence. It capped off a week of animosity between President Donald Trump's administration and traditional allies like Europe, with Trump threatening to impose tariffs on some European partners to press a bid to acquire Greenland.

As allies confront what some see as a hostile attitude from the US, they will almost certainly be unhappy to see that Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth's department will provide "credible options to guarantee U.S. military and commercial access to key terrain," especially Greenland and the Panama Canal.

Following a tiff this week at the World Economic Forum meeting in Davos, Switzerland, with Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney, the strategy at once urges cooperation with Canada and other neighbours while still issuing a stark warning.

"We will engage in good faith with our neighbours, from Canada to our partners in Central and South America, but we will ensure that they respect and do their part to defend our shared interests," the document says.

◆ SUNDAY CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 2664 ◆



ACROSS
1 Small partitioned space (7)
5 Affectedly superior (4-3)
9 Breed of large gundog (7)
10 Self-important person (7)
11 Past (5)
12 Easily (5,4)
13 Sleep-inducing drug (9)
15 Pleasing sound generally (5)
16 A person (5)
18 Capital of Iceland (9)
21 Rearrangement of government posts (9)
24 Passionately (5)
25 Stupefied (2,1,4)
26 To experience (7)
27 Unexpected bit of good fortune (7)
28 Act of contrition (7)

DOWN
1 Abundant (7)
2 Advance publicity (5-2)
3 Make a hasty getaway (3,3,3)
4 Soil (5)
5 Loud clamour (3,3,3)
6 A dozen dozen (5)
7 Extremely wicked (7)
8 Gigantic (7)
14 A long way from home (3,6)
15 Islamic fundamentalist guerrillas (9)
16 National game of Ireland (7)
17 A pungent condiment (7)
19 Ex-serviceman (7)
20 Central principle (7)
22 Treatment (5)
23 Fit out (5)

SOLUTIONS TO CROSSWORD 4024

CRYPTIC
ACROSS: 8, Cat-ch-it 9, On the t-urn 13, A-stir 14, Iris-H 15, W-I-nsome 16, P-ersist 17, Paper 18, Sugar 20, Rummy 22, Extend 23, A-void-s 25, Fr-antic 27, Hears-ay 30, Cracks 31, Dr-aper 32, W-H-ere 35, A-war-D 36, Re-cur 37, Bar-ring 39, Gobbled 41, Liner 42, A-wing 43, Promising 44, Peanuts.
DOWN: 1, Matter 2, Scar-city 3, Nip in the air 4, In the pink 5, Showers 6, Stand's over 7, (Septemb)Er-go 10, Dapper (rev) 11, D'-I-spute 12, He-arts 19, Grim-ace 21, Mar-sala (rev) 24, Pearl barley 26, Naked flame 28, Crackling 29, Spa-ring 30, Charge 32, Wa-r pai-nt 33, Engage 34, P(roper)-rudish 38, I-diot-'s 40, Bark.

EASY
ACROSS: 8, Pyjamas 9, Diplomacy 13, Henna 14, Irate 15, Pretend 16, Satchel 17, Brave 18, Verse 20, Lemon 22, Zagreb 23, Locate 25, Tremble 27, Hirsute 30, Trudge 31, Intend 32, Audit 35, Abyss 36, Louse 37, Hangman 39, Elderly 41, Ideal 42, Radio 43, Buttercup 44, Pliable.
DOWN: 1, Cygnet 2, Marathon 3, Lapis lazuli 4, Liberated 5, Slipper 6, Impervious 7, Acre 10, Chisel 11, Cabbage 12, Adhere 19, Roasted 21, Mercury 24, Gild the lily 26, Magistrate 28, Injurious 29, Revered 30, Thames 32, Abnormal 33, Tendon 34, Players 38, Meddle 40, Drum.

SU DO KU X - 3807

				3		9		6
				4				8
			5		8			
		5			4	1		
	2	6	9			3		
9			7		6			
6						8		
3								7

SOLUTION TO 3806

5	2	7	4	9	1	6	8	3
1	9	8	6	3	5	2	4	7
6	3	4	2	7	8	5	9	1
2	6	1	8	4	7	3	5	9
7	4	3	5	6	9	1	2	8
8	5	9	1	2	3	4	7	6
4	1	2	9	8	6	7	3	5
3	8	6	7	5	2	9	1	4
9	7	5	3	1	4	8	6	2

To solve the puzzle:
The objective is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column, each 3x3 box and each shaded diagonal line contains the same number only once.

SKILL DEFICIT Inability to dominate Kiwi spinners in middle overs in ODIs exposed Indian batters' limitations

'SWEEPING' CHANGES needed in batting approach

MADHU JAWALI
BENGALURU, DHNS

New Zealand often used to be India's bugbears in ICC events as the 7-10 win-loss record across three global events (50-over and 20-over World Cups and the lone World Test Championship final) shows. Alarmingly, this scourge has extended to bilateral series at home too. Two of India's long-held proud records have been obliterated by the Kiwis in the last 14 months. In November 2024, they inflicted a 3-0 whitewash for their first-ever Test series win in India. The Black Caps followed it with another first -- an ODI series win on Indian soil when they completed a 2-1 win in Indore on Sunday.

The inability of Indian middle order batters to dominate spinners during the just-concluded New Zealand ODI series has yet again brought to fore their struggles against the turning ball. AFP/ PTI

The Indian batters' struggles against spin, particularly in Tests, have been discussed ad nauseam in recent years following their repeated losses to visiting teams on turning tracks. What used to be a setback in an odd Test in a series has now grown into a major weakness, which saw them plummet to two series losses at home in about a year, against New Zealand and South Africa between November 2024 and November 2025.

In the just concluded ODI series against New Zealand, this shortcoming was once again exposed by Kiwi spinners. This time, however, it was not just the batters. Indian spinners, too, just as during the South Africa Test series, came into sharp focus as they struggled to have any impact on Kiwi batters. While India have been exceptional in T20Is, they seem to struggle as the format gets longer.

The warning signs have been there for a while, but little has been done to address the issue at any level.

The twin problems stem from domestic cricket, where you do not have a whole lot of quality spinners, the majority of whom now develop their skills to suit the T20 format in the hope of joining the IPL bandwagon. Because there are no quality spinners, you do not see many batters who can tackle high-class spin bowling. It is a classic chicken-and-egg case because we do not know which problem led to the other, but there is a big issue at hand and of that there is little doubt.

Blame it on pitches or lack of confidence, we have seen a trend with the majority of domestic captains whose utilisation of spinners has been debatable. They are often used as a control mechanism rather than attacking options, and the fields are set in such a way that a spinner has to bowl defensive lines at the cost of high trajectory, revs on the ball and variation. These are bad habits that do not survive the test of time.

"I know a left-arm spinner who does not bowl without midwicket and long-on fielders for a right-hand batter in red-ball cricket. So understand the problem," says former India batter Vijay Bharadwaj.

The two spinners Kuldeep Yadav and Ravindra Jadeja whom India employed in the ODIs against New Zealand could not contain the Kiwi batters, led by their nemesis Daryl Mitchell. While Kuldeep struggled for rhythm, Jadeja's limited arsenal was not enough to keep a well-prepared Mitchell and company quiet in the given conditions. They swept, reverse swept and stepped out, and the accomplished duo had no answer.

"Did you see how many hundreds were scored in the Vijay Hazare Trophy this time?" asks Bharadwaj when asked about the lack of a quality supply line. "How do you expect spinners to do well in these conditions and how do you expect them to develop? They focus more on drying up runs rather than taking wickets. If that is one side of the problem, batters get false confidence about their game. While I am not undermining any of their efforts, there has to be some balance in playing conditions where both sets of cricketers develop into quality players," he offers.

Bharadwaj, who grew up in an era when Indian batters could play spin blindfolded, was obviously referring to Indian batters' inability to dominate New Zealand spinners.

"Where is the sweep, where is the footwork?" he wonders.

Again, barring a few exceptions, historically the sweep shot has never been a trusted weapon for Indian batters.

Spinners in India v NZ
ODI Series, 2026

	O	R	W	Avg	Eco
Indian spinners	53	350	3	116.67	6.60
NZ spinners	59	317	5	63.40	5.37

Most Runs scored against spinners

V Kohli R 108 (110 balls) Outs- 0 S/R 98.2

D Mitchell R **161** (141 balls) Outs - **0** S/R **114.2**

W Young R **49** (52 balls) Outs - **1** Avg - **49.0** S/R - **94.2**

S Gill R **47** (47 balls) Outs - **1** AVt - **47.0** S/R - **100.0**

G Phillips **53** (50 balls) Ours - **1** Avg - **53.0** S/R - **106.0**

Batting in Overs 16-40

Match	India batting	NZ batting
1st ODI	**147/3**	**136/5**
2nd ODI	**112/4**	**163/1**
3rd ODI	**148/2**	**167/0**

Compiled by Arun Gopalakrishnan

While we have seen the Tendulkars or the Dravids, among many others, employ the sweep, it was never their primary mode of defence or run-making option. Blessed as they were with nimble footwork, the batters of the not-too-distant past did not necessarily have to rely on sweep or reverse sweep to dominate spinners. That halo has been broken now, and didn't require a Shane Warne or a Muttiah Muralitharan, both of whom struggled in India; the Santners and the Harmers have accomplished that task.

So how do you expect someone like Virat Kohli or KL Rahul to develop the sweep and reverse sweep at this stage of their careers, especially given the success they have enjoyed batting the way they do?

"This is the argument I keep having always," Bharadwaj says. "The game is evolving, so you too have to. You saw Kohli against spinners in the third ODI. He played them smartly, but could not dominate with his method. Of course, he has the ability to make up for that as he goes on, but we cannot be rigid about learning new skills. Again, there is a difference between technical change and technical adjustment. It does not require you to change your whole setup at the crease. It is just about making a small adjustment in technique and a big change in mindset," he explains.

"If the traditional method is not working, go for an unconventional approach. Sweep, reverse sweep or whatever it takes to upset a spinner's lines and lengths. Do not allow him to bowl the way he wants to. This is the exact opposite of what we did against New Zealand. They were not great spinners, but they were smart enough to choke the batters for runs. But this comes only with hours of practice. You cannot just go into a match and decide to sweep. Mitchell worked on these skills for one month before coming to India, and see how he is batting, look how well he controlled the middle overs."

Middle overs in an ODI, typically from 16 to 40, are crucial, and whoever controls this phase always stands a better chance of winning the match. While the first Powerplay sets the tempo for an innings, the following consolidation period up to over number 40 often sets up the game. With only four fielders allowed outside the 30-yard circle, spinners have to be precise as they bowl a significant chunk of these overs. The numbers show that this is where India lost the plot, once while batting first in the second ODI and then while chasing in the final ODI.

In the second game, where India managed a mere 112 for 4, New Zealand plundered 163 for 1. In the third, India improved to 148 for 2 but were still well inferior to New Zealand's 167 for no loss. The only match India won, the first ODI, they scored 147 for 3 as opposed to New Zealand's 136 for 5.

Cricket has always been a batter's game, and even more so in India. Sometimes, however, batting failures mask the bowlers' lack of success, but India can keep overlooking this mess only at their own peril.

Sourav Kothari

Sourav retains billiards title

BENGALURU, DHNS: Encouraged by his family members to compete at the premier National Championships soon after the passing of his father Manoj Kothari, Sourav Kothari scored an emotional 4-0 win over S Shrikrishna in the final to retain his billiards title in Bahadurgarh, Haryana on Saturday.

Earlier in the day, promising Aarav Sancheti from Maharashtra retained his sub-junior boys' snooker title, his third crown in as many days. The 15-year-old from Pune scored a lopsided 3-0 win over Owais Khan of Madhya Pradesh.

Results: Senior men: Billiards: Final: Sourav Kothari (PSPB) bt S Shrikrishna (PSPB) 4-0; Third-place playoff: Rayaan Razmi (Mah) bt Siddharth Parikh (RPSB) 3-1.
Final standings: 1. Sourav Kothari; 2. S Shrikrishna; 3. Rayaan Razmi; 4. Siddharth Parikh; 5. Dhruv Sitwala (PSPB); 6. Brijesh Damani (PSPB); 7. Rishabh Thakkar (Mah); 8. Dhvaj Haria (PSPB).
Sub-junior boys: Snooker (Final): Aarav Sancheti (Mah) bt Owais Khan (MP) 3-0.

Vaishnavi, Laxmi bag gold

BENGALURU, DHNS: Karnataka's Vaishnavi Rawal and Laxmi Obannavar picked up a gold medal each in their respective races during the 60th National Cross Country Championships at the Kutiyatu Army Ground Namkum in Ranchi, Jharkhand on Saturday.
Results: Men: Under-20 (8 kms): Mohit Choudhary (Tel, 25:04.31), 1; Shailesh Kushwaha (Kar, 25:24.20), 2; Shekhar Choudhary (Cgh, 25:47.33), 3. **Team:** UP, 1; Maharashtra, 2; Haryana, 3.
Women: U-20 (6 kms): Vaishnavi Rawal (Kar, 22:45.59), 1; Sakshi Bhandari (Mah, 22:53.84), 2; Versha (UP, 22:58.04), 3. **Team:** Maharashtra, 1; Karnataka, 2; Himachal Pradesh, 3.
U-16 (2 kms): Laxmi Obannavar (Kar, 6:57.02), 1; Arti Yadav (UP, 7:15.05), 2; Thanishkaa Anbaras (TN, 7:19.16), 3.

TENNIS AUSTRALIAN OPEN

Novak hits historic 400

Osaka withdraws with injury; Wawrinka bids goodbye

MELBOURNE, AFP

Brutal heat triggered a five-hour suspension of matches on outside courts at the Australian Open on Saturday as Novak Djokovic powered to another landmark win but Naomi Osaka pulled out.

Players and spectators roasted on day seven at Melbourne Park, where temperatures soared to 38C.

The tournament's Heat Stress Scale hit the highest level of five in the early afternoon, prompting the suspension on courts without roofs and play did not resume until after 7:00 pm.

On a dramatic day on and off court, reigning champions Jannik Sinner and Madison Keys moved into the last 16, as did 10-time winner Djokovic.

Two-time champion Osaka was supposed to be in action in the third round but pulled out hours before because of an abdominal injury.

The Japanese star, who made a grand entrance this week in a jellyfish-inspired outfit, wrote on Instagram that "it breaks my heart".

She was due to face Australian qualifier Maddison Inglis, who goes on to play Iga Swiatek in the last 16.

Swiatek, the second seed from Poland, survived a roller coaster to beat 31st Russian seed Anna Kalinskaya 6-1, 1-6, 6-1.

Madison Keys revelled in the scorching temperatures to set up a last-16 showdown with podcast co-host Jessica Pegula.

American ninth seed Taylor Fritz ended the run of Stan Wawrinka on the popular Swiss veteran's farewell to the tournament in four sets. The 40-year-old former champion is playing his last season.

Results: Singles: 3rd round: Men: 5-Lorenzo Musetti (Ita) bt Tomas Machac (Cze) 5-7, 6-4, 6-2, 5-7, 6-2; 9-Taylor Fritz (USA) bt Stan Wawrinka (SUI) 7-6 (5), 2-6, 6-4, 6-4; 4-Novak Djokovic (SRB) bt Botic van de Zandschulp (NED) 6-3, 6-4, 7-6 (4); 8-Ben Shelton (USA) bt 30-Valentin Vacherot (Mon) 6-4, 6-4, 7-6 (5); 22-Luciano Darderi (Ita) bt 15-Karen Khachanov (Rus) 7-6 (5), 3-6, 6-3, 6-4; 2-Jannik Sinner (Ita) bt Eliot Spizzirri (USA) 4-6, 6-3, 6-4, 6-4.
Women: 6-Jessica Pegula (USA) bt Oksana Selekhmeteva (Rus) 6-3, 6-2; 9-Madison Keys (USA) bt Karolina Pliskova (Cze) 6-3, 6-3; 4-Amanda Anisimova (USA) bt Peyton Stearns (USA) 6-1, 6-4; 21-Elise Mertens (Bel) bt Nikola Bartunkova (Cze) 6-0, 6-4; Maddison Inglis (Aus) bt 16-Naomi Osaka (Jpn) w/o; 2-Iga Swiatek (Pol) bt 31-Anna Kalinskaya (Rus) 6-1, 1-6, 6-1; 5-Rybakina (Kaz) bt Tereza Bartunkova (Cze) 6-2, 6-3.

Serbia's Novak Djokovic mimics playing a violin on his racquet after beating Netherlands' Botic van de Zandschulp.

Yuki advances, Balaji ousted

India's Yuki Bhambri advanced to the third round of the men's doubles at the Australian Open on Saturday, while compatriot N. Sriram Balaji bowed out, reports PTI from Melbourne.

Bhambri and his Swedish partner Andre Goransson overcame the unseeded pairing of Santiago Gonzalez and David Pel 4-6, 7-6 (5), 6-3 in a second-round contest that was interrupted by the tournament's extreme heat policy.

Man City end winless streak as West Ham cruise

Pressure mounts on Spurs coach Frank after Burnley draw

LONDON, AFP

Thomas Frank's job is under renewed threat after Tottenham dropped more points in a 2-2 draw at relegation-threatened Burnley on Saturday as Manchester City cut the gap to Premier League leaders Arsenal to four points.

Disgruntled Spurs fans vented their anger at their manager after last week's damaging 2-1 defeat against West Ham, chanting: "You're getting sacked in the morning."

The former Brentford boss breathed a sigh of relief after a 2-0 midweek win against Borussia Dortmund in the Champions League.

City close gap

Pep Guardiola's City came into the match at the Etihad without a win in four league games in 2026 and smarting after an embarrassing 3-1 Champions League defeat at Norwegian side Bodo/Glimt.

Semenyo

Erling Haaland was left on the bench after just one goal in five league matches, with Guardiola explaining his star forward needed to "clean a little bit his mind and body".

Centre-back Marc Guehi made his debut five days after his move from Crystal Palace, easing City's crippling defensive crisis that has claimed John Stones, Ruben Dias and Josko Gvardiol.

Egypt forward Omar Marmoush put the home side ahead in the sixth minute, finishing sharply from a Matheus Nunes cross for his first Premier League goal of the season.

Results: West Ham: 3 (Summerville 14th, Bowen 28th, Fernandes 43rd) bt Sunderland: 1 (Brobbey 66th); Burnley: 2 (Tuanzebe 45th, Foster 76th) drew with Tottenham: 2 (Van de Ven 38th, Romero 90th); Fulham: 2 (Chukwueze 72nd, Wilson 90th+2) bt Brighton: 1 (Ayari 28th); Man City: 2 (Marmoush 6th, Semenyo 45th+2) bt Wolves: 0.

Erigaisi held, Gukesh fumbles

WIJK AAN ZEE (THE NETHERLANDS), PTI: World champion D Gukesh was himself to blame as he fell into a blindspot and made an unimaginable blunder to go down to Nodirbek Abdusatorov of Uzbekistan in a sixth round match of the Tata Steel chess tournament here on Saturday.

Top seeded Indian Grandmaster Arjun Erigaisi, meanwhile, benefitted from a similar oversight by Matthias Bluebaum of Germany to salvage half a point.

On a day filled with drama, Indian GM Gukesh blundered almost with a blind-eye and had to resign immediately in a position he would have survived with a possible draw.

It's very clear to what is referred as a blind-spot in chess when at a given moment the player is not able to recognize for a few seconds what's happening. While this was the first instance for Gukesh to go through this after becoming a Grandmaster, his fans and followers would hope that it was also the last time.

Erigaisi, on the other hand, was dead lost against Bluebaum, the German who surprised everyone by qualifying to the Candidates tournament later this year.

However, as luck would have it, Bluebaum also suffered from a seemingly blind-spot as he failed to find a simple winning sequence of moves.

Results (Round 6): Nodirbek Abdusattorov (Uzb, 4.5) bt D Gukesh (Ind, 3); R Praggnanandhaa (Ind, 2) drew with Vladimir Fedoseev (Slo, 3.5); Matthias Bluebaum (Ger, 3) drew with Arjun Erigaisi (Ind, 2.5); Aravindh Chithambaram (Ind, 2) drew with Javokhir SIndarov (Uzb, 4); Hans Moke Niemann (USA, 3.5) lt to Vincent Keymer (Ger, 3.5); Yagiz Kaan Erdogmus (Tur, 3) bt Jorden van Foreest (Ned, 3); Thai Dai Van Nugyen (Cze, 2) drew with Anish Giri (Ned, 1.5).

Arjun Erigaisi

Toofans take on Royals for a spot in HIL final

BHUBANESWAR, PTI: The battle for a place in the final of the men's Hockey India League (HIL) has reached its decisive stage with Hyderabad Toofans taking on Ranchi Royals in Qualifier 2 here on Sunday.

It will be a do-or-die match with the winner earning a coveted spot in the final, where table-toppers and Qualifier 1 winners Kalinga Lancers await.

The losing team, meanwhile, will play the third-fourth place match against HIL GC on Monday. The final is also on Monday.

Hyderabad Toofans

LIVE 6 PM SONY SPORTS

Hyderabad Toofans made it to Qualifier 2 with a clinical 2-0 victory over HIL GC in the Eliminator, producing a composed defensive performance and making the most of their scoring opportunities to stay alive in the title race.

Ranchi Royals, on the other hand, arrive after a narrow 1-2 defeat to Kalinga Lancers in a closely fought Qualifier 1, where fine margins separated the two sides in a high-intensity contest. With one last chance to book a berth in the final, both teams will be under immense pressure to deliver.

Atiqa secures Modena seat

LA CONCA (ITALY), PTI

Indian racing prodigy Atiqa Mir has secured a coveted drive for reigning world champions Modena Racing Team for the 2026 season of the prestigious WSK championship, considered as the 'Formula 1' of karting.

Atiqa, all of 11, has taken the tougher route to the top by opting to race in the highly competitive junior category (age 12-14) this season.

On the back of her impressive performances in the mini category (age 8-12) last year, the Formula 1 Academy supported driver was signed for the entire season and will drive in the WSK Super Master Series, WSK Euro Series, WSK Final Cup amongst other championships.

Atiqa Mir

In the process, Atiqa will become the first Indian female ever to drive in OKNJ category in WSK and remarkably will be the only female on the entire grid of 37 world class drivers.

The WSK series is the highest level of karting which attracts the best driving talent from around the world besides leading kart and engine manufacturers. The WSK series is focused on developing young drivers by providing a platform for them to improve their race craft and technical knowledge.

Karthikeya hits double ton as Karnataka amass 634/4

BENGALURU, DHNS: A Karthikeya KP double ton and fluent hundreds from skipper Aneeshwar Gautam and Harshil Dharmani strengthened Karnataka's position after another fruitful outing with the bat in their Col CK Nayudu Elite Group fixture against Chandigarh on the second day at Alur (3) in Bengaluru here.

After Karnataka declared on 634/4 in 138.2 overs, Chandigarh made a wobbly start to their reply, finishing at 98/3 in 40 overs with Devang Kaushik (13 not out) and Aarush Bhandari (6 not out) in the middle. Mohsin Khan returned with figures of 2/29.

Brief scores: Karnataka (O/n: 369/2): 634/4 in 138.2 overs (Prakhar Chaturvedi 95, Faizan Khan 45, Kartikeya KP 200., Dhruv Prabhakhar 80, Aneeshwar Gautam 110 n.o., Harshil Dharmani 100 n.o.) vs Chandigarh: 98/3 in 40 overs (Dushyant 59; Mohsin Khan 2-29).

Karthikeya KP. DH PHOTO

Advay's overall show takes EIS to semis

BENGALURU, DHNS: In a performance he will remember for a long time, Advay Choudhary first scored an unbeaten ton and later picked up six wickets that gave Ebenezer International School an 86-run win over VSS International Public School in the quarterfinals of the BT Ramaiah Shied for Under-14 School Division II here.

With his batting colleagues failing to hold ground, Advay's 128-ball 113 not out helped EIS reach 171 all out in 40 overs before the star with the bat returned to strike with the ball and claimed 6/20 to skittle out VSS IPS for 85 in 30.2 overs.

Brief scores (quarterfinals): Ebenezer International School: 171 all out in 40 overs (Advay Choudhary 113 n.o.; Yashmith B Gowda 2-40, Aarnav Karsha 3-18, Anirudh 3-23) bt VSS International Public School: 85 all out in 30.2 overs (Sankalp S 28; Advay Choudhary 6-20, Maasmit Padhihari 2-12).
The Sports School: 399/8 in 50 overs (Keshava T 102, Pavandeep R Bharadakane 177, Lakshit Kumar Sipani 39; Nandan Hegde 3-77, Panav Chawla 2-59) bt Vydehi School of Excellence: 145 all out in 46.3 overs (Archit Rawat 36, Shreyan Ghosh 35; Rushikesh Pukale 2-25, Raghav K Kumar 3-10).
Delhi Public School, Whitefield: 238/9 in 50 overs (Aadit Kaul 110, Prateek Kumar Jena 33; Daiwick Pradeep Sharma 3-46, Ansh Singh 4-33) lt to Sri Sri Ravishankar Vidyamandir, East: 240/9 in 48.5 overs (Tejasvi Sharma 63, Sudip Balaguru 29, Ansh Shukla 48 n.o.; Ayansh Kejriwal 2-42, Aadit Kaul 4-35).
Bishop Cotton Boys School: 118 all out in 48.1 overs (Reyes Raj Madhusudhan 63 n.o.; Aaryan Nagesh 5-12) lt to School Of India: 120/3 in 31.2 overs (Hrithvik Shetty 55).

◆ ON TV ◆

CRICKET

3rd T20I: India vs New Zealand **(7 pm)**. **LIVE** on **Star Sports 1**, **JioHotstar**.

U-19 WC: Australia vs South Africa, West Indies vs Ireland **(1 pm)**. **LIVE** on **Star Sports Select 2**, **JioHotstar**.

Ranji Trophy: UP vs Jharkhand, Puducherry vs J&K, Gujarat vs Railways, **(Day 4, 9:30 am)**. **LIVE** on **Star Sports Khel**, **JioHotstar**.

FOOTBALL

EPL: Palace vs Chelsea, Brentford vs Nottingham, Newcastle vs Aston Villa **(7:30 pm)**, Arsenal vs Man United **(10 pm)**. **LIVE** on **Star Sports Network**, **JioHotstar**.

La Liga: Barcelona vs Real Oviedo **(8:45 pm)**, Sociedad vs Celta **(11 pm)**. **LIVE** on **FanCode**.

TENNIS

Australian Open: Singles Round of 16 **(5:30 am)**. **LIVE** on **Sony Sports Network**, **SonyLIV**.

BADMINTON

Indonesia Masters: Finals **(11:30 am)**. **LIVE** on **Star Sports Select 1 HD**, **JioHotstar**.

HOCKEY

HIL: Qualifier 2 **(6 pm)**. **LIVE** on **Sony Sports Network**, **SonyLIV**.

CRICKET THIRD T20I

India look to seal the deal

Pressure mounting on Samson to deliver after Kishan's Raipur fireworks

GUWAHATI, PTI

Ishan Kishan's sensational comeback will reignite debate over who should be Abhishek Sharma's preferred opening partner with Sanju Samson's increasing struggles as the hosts look to seal the five-match T20I series in the third game here on Sunday.

With just two weeks and three matches against New Zealand in the ongoing series left before the start of their T20 World Cup title defence, India's combination looks largely settled.

The batting and bowling units appear sorted and only a few spots remain under scrutiny and one such slot currently belongs to Samson. Kishan's superb 76 off 32 balls, however, intensified the spotlight on Sanju.

Reinstated as opener alongside Abhishek Sharma at the expense of Test and ODI skipper Shubman Gill, Samson has been failing to make the most of his chances.

Gill, despite his technical solidity, struggled to make an impact in T20Is and was sidelined in a bold call to accommodate Sanju, who had scored three centuries in five matches late last year.

But back in his preferred slot, the Kerala man has not delivered, and time is running out with hardly any turnaround time before the T20 World Cup as the series would be a make-or-break for him.

His vulnerability against express pace has once again resurfaced. During the England series earlier this year, he fell cheaply five times to fast bowlers, including three dismissals in a row to Jofra Archer.

Against New Zealand, he managed only 10 and 6, dismissed by Kyle Jamieson and Matt Henry respectively.

Former India opener and noted coach WV Raman summed it up on social media after his Raipur dismissal.

"Samson will be inconsistent as long as he doesn't adjust the speed of his bat on the downswing in relation to the pace of the ball. In simple terms one can't drive a car at the same speed all the time, everywhere," Raman posted on X.

Samson also looked untidy behind the stumps, failing to collect a wide yorker from Arshdeep Singh that ran away for four byes as New Zealand crossed the 200-run mark.

There were concerns over skipper Suryakumar Yadav's prolonged lean patch, but he silenced his critics in style, ending a run of 23 T20I innings without a fifty with a blazing 82 off 37 balls.

The seven-wicket win in the second T20, which gave India a 2-0 lead, was even more impressive as it came without much contribution from in-form Abhishek Sharma, the explosive inform world No. 1 T20I batter, who fell for a golden duck.

Suryakumar seemed to have tweaked his approach in walking across the stumps to access the off-side and playing his trademark strokes over point and covers.

From 10 off 10 balls, he stepped on the gas in style smashing 72 from the next 27 deliveries as India chased down 209 with ease, reaching the target in just 15.2 overs.

However, before Suryakumar took charge, the platform was set by the diminutive left-hander Kishan, who blasted a 21-ball fifty.

India had slipped to 6/2 in 1.1 overs, but Kishan's counter-attack turned the game around as they completed their joint-highest successful T20I chase with 28 balls to spare.

India's Ishan Kishan, who destroyed New Zealand with a spectacular 76 off 32 balls in the second T20I, will be looking to replicate the same in the third game in Guwahati on Sunday. PTI

LIVE 7 PM STAR SPORTS

Delhi swat aside table-toppers RCB

Jemimah's girls score 7-wkt win to jump to 2nd spot

VADODARA, PTI

Delhi Capitals notched a comprehensive seven-wicket win over table-toppers Royal Challengers Bengaluru to stay in contention for the playoffs of the Women's Premier League, here on Saturday.

After opting to field, Delhi produced a clinical bowling show to dismiss RCB for 109 in 20 overs, and chased down the modest target with 26 balls to spare to hand their opponents first defeat of the season.

Laura Wolvaardt top scored with a 38-ball 42 not out while captain Jemimah Rodrigues chipped in with 24, as Delhi Capitals reached 111 for 3 in 15.4 overs.

DC did not start the chase so well as they were reduced to 24 for 2 in the fourth over with openers Shafali Verma (16) and Lizelle Lee (6) getting out cheaply.

But a 52-run partnership for the third wicket between Rodrigues and Wolvaardt took DC towards the win. Rodrigues faced 26 balls for her 24 and hit four boundaries. Wolvaardt hit four boundaries and one six in her 38-ball unbeaten knock.

Marizanne Kapp

Marizanne Kapp, who struck 19 not out off 15 balls, hit a four off Shreyanka Patil for the winning runs.

Sayali Satghare was the most successful RCB bowler with 2/18 while Radha Yadav got one wicket.

After Saturday's win, DC jumped to second spot with six points while RCB remained on top with 10 points.

Earlier, Delhi Capitals produced a disciplined bowling show to bowl RCB out for 109.

Sent in to bat, captain Smriti Mandhana top scored for RCB with a 34-ball 38 with the help of six fours and one six, but all her other teammates struggled.

Brief scores: RCB: 109 all out in 20 overs (Smriti Mandhana 38; Nandini Sharma 3-26, Marizanne Kapp 2-17, Chinelle Henry 2-22) lt to Delhi Capitals: 111/3 in 15.4 overs (Laura Wolvaardt 42; Sayali Sathgare 2-18). **Result:** DC won by 7 wkts. **PoM:** Marizanne Kapp. **RCB's next match:** MI (Jan 26)

Women's Premier League Points Table

Teams	P	W	L	NRR	Pts
RCB (Q)	6	5	1	+1.236	10
DC	6	3	3	-0.169	6
GG	6	3	3	-0.341	6
MI	6	2	4	+0.046	4
UPW	6	2	4	-0.769	4

MP's Mantri calls the shots in Alur

Opener's 89 not out leaves bungling Karnataka staring down the barrel

VIGNESH BHARADWAJ
BENGALURU, DHNS

It was a cool and pleasant morning in Bengaluru, the kind that the city usually offers and one which is apt for four-day cricket. By close of play in the evening, Karnataka were made to feel the heat as Madhya Pradesh slowly went about their business to exert control on the game, extending their lead to 336 runs on the third day of their penultimate Ranji Trophy Elite Group B fixture in Alur (1) here.

While this still does not ensure them three points, Madhya Pradesh will be the happier side going into the final day, finishing on 204/6 in 71 overs.

After bowling Karnataka out in 6.1 overs after play resumed on day 3, MP, sitting fourth in Group B with 16 points, would have had a sole target in mind -- to bat Karnataka out of the game.

Having taken a commanding 132-run lead, the visitors opted for a traditional approach to further frustrate Karnataka. The bowling from hosts was insipid in the first session which enabled the visitors to tighten the noose comfortably.

However, Shikhar Shetty (2/41) picked Karnataka's first wicket in the 19th over, trapping Yash Dubey (17, 54b, 2x4) in front before lunch.

It was all Karnataka in the second session as a Vidyadhar Patil (3/39) inspired fightback saw them dominate even as Himanshu Mantri (89 n.o., 203b, 4x4) notched up his ninth first-class fifty in 109 balls, with Madhya Pradesh inching closer towards the 250-run lead.

Vidyadhar, who was in the middle of a menacing spell, castled both Shubham Sharma (32, 49b, 3x4) and Rajat Patidar (0, 2b) in three balls, showcasing an exhibition of seam bowling.

He also drew a mistake from Mantri on 49 but substitute Nikin Jose failed to make full use of the opportunity at first slip. On the other hand, Shreyas Gopal (1/52) controlled things from one end and picked up Venkatesh Iyer (1, 3b) in the 36th over, sending a few jitters in the opposition camp.

Shikhar struck a second blow in the 46th over with Akshat Raghuwanshi (13, 28b) playing all around a full length ball and was cleaned up for 13, to have the visitors 123/5.

Just when Karnataka started to crawl back into the game, Saransh Jain (15 retd hurt, 31b) steadied things with a 30-run partnership with Himanshu before he hurt his finger.

Madhya Pradesh's Himanshu Mantri scored an unbeaten 89 on the third day of their Ranji Trophy game against Karnataka in Alur on Saturday. DH PHOTO/ KRISHNAKUMAR P S

Nair suffers cut

Going into the final day, Karnataka, sweating on injuries, will hope that Karun Nair, who was taken to the hospital for stitches (five) after he cut his webbing between his left index and middle finger, will be fit to bat.

It is learnt that the team management will take a call whether he would bat on the fourth morning.

On the other hand, Shrijith KL (swollen finger) has been given a green signal to bat but did not take the field to keep.

SCOREBOARD

MADHYA PRADESH (I Innings): 323 all out

KARNATAKA (I Innings, O/n: 168/8): Mayank Agarwal c Sagar b Aryan 0 (7b), Aneesh KV c Patidar b Saransh 92 (171b, 9x4, 1x6), Devdutt Padikkal lbw Saransh 0 (1b), Karun Nair (run out) 12 (19b, 1x4), Shrijith KL c Himanshu b Sen 7 (17b, 1x4), Abhinav Manohar st Himanshu b Saransh 14 (22b, 2x4), Shreyas Gopal lbw Saransh 41 (76b, 5x4), Shikhar Shetty lbw Aryan 5 (31b), Vidyadhar Patil b Sagar 4 (12b), Vyshak Vijaykumar b Sen 5 (14b), Vidwath Kaverappa (not out) 8. Extras (LB-3) 3. **TOTAL (all out, 64.1 overs) 191.**

Fall of wickets: 1-2 (Agarwal), 2-5 (Padikkal), 3-19 (Nair), 4-39 (Shrijith), 5-60 (Manohar), 6-142 (Shreyas), 7-155 (Shikhar), 8-162 (Vidyadhar), 9-172 (Vyshak).

Bowling: Kumar Kartikeya 10-1-45-1, Aryan Pandey 12-1-35-2, Saransh Jain 20.1-4-42-4, Kuldeep Sen 12-1-45-2, Sagar Solanki 10-3-21-1.

MADHYA PRADESH (II Innings): Yash Dubey lbw Shikhar 17 (54b, 2x4), Himanshu Mantri (batting) 89 (203b, 4x4), Shubham Sharma b Vidyadhar 32 (49b, 3x4), Rajat Patidar b Vidyadhar 0 (2b), Venkatesh Iyer b Shreyas 1 (3b), Akshat Raghuwanshi b Shikhar 13 (28b, 1x4), Saransh Jain retd hurt 15 (31b, 1x4, 1x6), Sagar Solanki lbw Vidyadhar 13 (32b, 2x4), Aryan Pandey (batting) 13 (24b, 1x4). Extras (W-6, B-5) 11. **TOTAL (for 6 wkts, 71 overs) 204.**

Fall of wickets: 1-38 (Yash), 2-96 (Shubham), 3-96 (Patidar), 4-99 (Venkatesh), 5-123 (Akshat), 6-179 (Sagar).

Bowling: Vidwath Kaverappa 13-4-28-0, Vidyadhar Patil 16-5-39-3, Vyshak Vijaykumar 11-1-39-0, Shikhar Shetty 11-0-41-2, Shreyas Gopal 20-3-52-1.

Group B brief scores: In Mangalapuram: Kerala: 139 all out & (O/n: 21/2) 185 all out in 48 overs (Vishnu Vinod 56, Salman Nizar 53; Rohit Dhanda 4-38, Vishu 3-41) lt to Chandigarh: 416 all out in 115.4 overs. **Chandigarh: 7 pts; Kerala: 0.**

In Pune: Goa: 209 all out & 210/6 in 73 overs (Abhinav Tejrana 109, Darshan Misal 52 n.o.; Jalaj Saxena 2-64, HA Walunj 3-45) vs Maharashtra: (O/n 306/8): 350 all out in 106 overs (Prithvi Shaw 31, Ruturaj Gaikwaj 66, SS Nawale 105, Vicky Ostwal 38; Koushik V 2-58, Arjun Tendulkar 2-49, Lalit Yadav 4-98).

Dominant India crush New Zealand

BULAWAYO, PTI

Skipper Ayush Mhatre's 27-ball 53 underlined India's dominant show as they notched a crushing seven-wicket victory via DLS method over New Zealand in the U-19 World Cup here on Saturday.

An all-round India won a truncated game of 37-overs-per-side with complete ease, stamping their authority in the competition with another big victory. Chasing a revised target of 130, India made 130 for three in a mere 13.3 overs to record their third consecutive win and top Group B.

RS Ambrish (8-1-29-4) and Henil Patel (7.2-1-23-3) led the bowling charge early for India who had asked New Zealand to bat first in damp conditions of the rain-truncated game.

New Zealand were reduced to 69 for 7 as Indian bowlers continued to strike right from the word go, and eventually bowled the Kiwis out for 135 in 36.2 overs. Snehith Reddy (10) was the only New Zealand batter among the top five to score in double digits. Even as the lower-order resisted, New Zealand never had enough runs on the board.

RS Ambrish. X

Jacob Cotter (23), Callum Samson (37) and Selwin Sanjay (28) added some valuable late runs for New Zealand but none of them could impose themselves against the Indians, for whom the trio of Khilan Patel, Mohamed Enaan and Kanish Chouhan claimed a wicket each.

Brief scores: New Zealand: 135 all out in 36.2 overs (Callum Samson 37, Selwin Sanjay 28; RS Ambrish 4-29, Henil Patel 3-23) lt to India: 130/3 in 13.3 overs (Vaibhav Sooryavanshi 40, Ayush Mhatre 53;) by by 7 wkts (DLS Method). **PoM:** RS Ambrish.**India's next match:** Jan 27 (Zimbabwe)

England level series against Lanka

COLOMBO, AFP: Joe Root produced a batting masterclass on a turning track to steer England to a hard-fought five-wicket win over Sri Lanka, squaring the three-match ODI series in Colombo on Saturday.

With their backs to the wall and defeat meaning curtains for the series, Root played the anchor to perfection, crafting a gritty 75 as England crossed the line with 22 deliveries to spare.

Brief scores: Sri Lanka: 219 all out in 49.3 overs (Pathum Nissanka 26, Kusal Mendis 26, Dhananjaya de Silva 40, Charith Asalanka 45, Pavan Rathnayake 29; Jamie Overton 2-21, Adil Rashid 2-34, Joe Root 2-12) lt to England: 223/5 in 46.2 overs (Ben Duckett 39, Joe Root 75, Harry Brook 42, Jos Buttler 33; Dhananjaya de Silva 2-37, Jeffery Vandersay 2-45). **Result:** Eng won by 5 wkts. **PoM:** Joe Root. **3-match ODI series:** Tied 1-1. **Third match:** Colombo (Jan 27).

Gayathri to head women's Sr selection committee

BENGALURU, DHNS: KR Gayathri has been appointed as the chairperson of the women's senior selection committee, the Karnataka State Cricket Association announced in a statement on Saturday.

Gayathri will head the four-person team comprising Dr Nivedita Reshme, Ashrayi N Ram and Leena Prasad.

The KSCA also included Srinivas Murthy, Jhanavi Desai, Jayashree D, Jhanavi Narasimhaa and Ruth Maben for the women's cricket committee.

Women's Cricket Committee: Srinivas Murthy, Jhanavi Desai, Jayashree D, Jhanavi Narasimha, Ruth Maben.

Senior selection committee: KR Gayathri (chairperson), Dr Nivedita Reshme, Ashrayi N Ram, Leena Prasad.

Junior selection committee: Mala Sundareshan, Saba Siddique, PJ Hemalatha, Spoorti Parvatikar.

Pratika, Vaishnavi picked for Australia Test

NEW DELHI,PTI: India's World Cup winning star Pratika Rawal along with left-arm spinner Vaishnavi Sharma and seamer Kranti Gaud received their maiden long-format call-ups for the one-off Test against Australia to be held at Perth from March 6 to 9.

Pratika's inclusion was a formality.

The 15-member squad will be led by Harmanpreet Kaur, and the Test will follow the white-ball format matches (3 T20Is, 3 ODIs), beginning from February 15.

The selectors also picked India A squad for ACC Rising Star Asia Cup, and it will be led by experienced left-arm spinner Radha Yadav..

India Test squad: Harmanpreet Kaur (capt), Smriti Mandhana (vice-capt), Shafali Varma, Jemimah Rodrigues, Amanjot Kaur, Richa Ghosh (WK), Uma Chetry (WK), Pratika Rawal, Harleen Deol, Deepti Sharma, Renuka Thakur, Sneh Rana, Kranti Gaud, Vaishnavi Sharma, Sayali Satghare.

India A squad: Humairaa Kaazi, Vrinda Dinesh, Anushka Sharma, Deeya Yadav (subject to fitness), Tejal Hasabnis, Nandani Kashyap (WK), Mamta M (WK), (subject to fitness), Radha Yadav (C), Sonia Mendhiya, Minnu Mani, Tanuja Kanwer, Prema Rawat, Saima Thakor, Jintamani Kalita, Nandani Sharma.

Openers Abinith, Sumukh get the job done for Bowlers Cricket Club

BENGALURU, DHNS

Unbeaten tons by openers Abinith Gowli (131 n.o.) and Sumukh S Bharadwaj (115 n.o.) saw Bowlers Cricket Club successfully chase down the target and notch up a 10-wicket victory over Canara Union Cricket Club in the KSCA Group I, Division I-V League Cum Knockout Tournament for JB Mallaradhya Shield here.

Pranil Kulhad first shone with 4/64 as Bowlers CC restricted Canara Union CC for 262/9. Gowli and Sumukh then flayed Canara bowlers to set up a huge win for Bowlers CC.

Brief scores: Canara Union CC: 262/9 in 50 overs (Anirudh M Bangera 75, Prabhu Raj 25, CM Srinivas 8; Sai Ritvik J 2-27, Pranil Kuhad 4-64) lt to Bowlers CC: 265/0 in 40.1 overs (Abinith Gowli 131 n.o., Sumukh S Bharadwaj 115 n.o.).
Yuvaka Sangha CC: 279 all out in 49.2 overs (Moksh Nahar 36, Pachaiyappan K 39, Deepak M 47, Arif Baig 41; Abhilash KC 2-30, Manish L 2-53, Bhuvan Bhat 3-35) bt Seshadripuram College: 184 all out in 41 overs (Mohammed Fazal 37, Kushal Raja 26, Lohith Gowda ND 29; Arif Baig 4-37, Moksh Nahar 3-32).
Royal CC, Chinthamani: 243 all out in 41.3 overs (Deepak S 47, Ranjan M S 38, Pareekith Okkunda 79, Kashish Bahuguna 41; Aryan S 2-42, Arav Prasad 3-40, Sujan Aravind N 4-50) bt Friends CC, Kolar: 116 all out in 27.1 overs (Siddana Gouda 2-25, Deepak CB 3-28, Kashish Bahuguna 2-18, Shreyas AV 2-13).
Vivekananda Union CC: 95 all out in 34.3 overs (Sunil Kumar DH 3-22, Akash S R 2-9, Sharath KM 3-11) lt to National Cricketers: 99/5 in 14.1 overs (Kathir Vel R 33 n.o., Nithin Gopalakrishna 37; Sudhakar Reddy 4-21).

Jaihind CC: 100 all out in 28.2 overs (Asif Ali 32; Deepak NJ 4-13, Mohith L 5-29) lt to YMCA CC (3): 103/4 in 17.5 overs (Vivek NP 26; Mohammad Asif Ansari M 2-32).
Government Arts College: 90 all out in 17.4 overs (Manju 52; Dhruvinraj Shetty 5-22, Vignesh Nag A 2-23) lt to Palace Orchard CC: 91/1 in 6.3 overs (Anish John 33).Head Quarters CC: 215 all out in 47.4 overs (Shashank HC 100, Nagaraj Hegde 2-51, Rahul Shetty 2-27, Rahul Menon 2-49) lt to Mathikere CC: 216/6 in 47.4 overs (Adithya Krishnan 38, Nischal D 115 n.o.; Chaman Nikhil S 2-35, Kiran J 2-24).
Rajajinagar Colts C: 269/8 in 50 overs (Kishan J 90, Nithish K 30, Deekshith HS 94 n.o.; Sutej Simha KV 3-41, Ankith Krishna Bhargav 2-28) lt to BM S Engineering College: 270/ 8 in 45.3 overs (Ankith Krishna Bhargav 60, Amogh M 70 n.o., Manish N 33; Hemant Kumar 2-45, Sreenidhi GR Shastry 2-28, Deekshith HS 2-44).
Vivekanagar Cricketers: 311 all out in 47.2 overs (M Kishore 100, Tanmay Muduli 38, Inbarasaganan Bharathi 63; Venkatachalapathy G 3-49, Venugopal V 2-81, Sri Thilak N Kolar P 3-48, Dhanush SR 2-15) bt Young Boys CC, Kolar: 161 all out in 29 overs (AM Srihari 33, Karthik V Gowda 38, Manoj Kumar R 28; Manu AG 3-32, Deepak B 2-41, Inbarasaganan Bharathi 3-3).
Kengeri Cricketers: 121 all out in 28 overs (Rahul G Raju 25, Yeshwanth N 39 n.o.; Sharath BS 2-24, N Sanjay Bharadwaj 3-41) lt to Friends CC: 124/5 in 17.3 overs (Likith Rama P 40 n.o., Rashid M 26 n.o.; Suhaan Bhandary 3-41, Sharat 2-33).

THE Z FACTOR

The multipolar world no one asked for

Mohamed Zeeshan
is a student of all things global and, self-confessedly, master of none, notwithstanding his Columbia Master's, a stint with the UN and with monarchs in the Middle East

@ZeeMohamed_

At the World Economic Forum in Davos this week, Canada's Prime Minister Mark Carney delivered a speech that might as well have been written by a foreign ministry official in New Delhi.

Over the course of 20 minutes, Carney declared that the "fiction" of a Western-led "rules-based order" is dead. For decades, countries traded with each other to expand the pie and create opportunities. But large powers have now weaponised this economic integration to coerce smaller nations. Tariffs are leverage, and supply chains are vulnerabilities.

Under the circumstances, Carney warned that if middle powers don't act together to gain a seat at the table, they will end up on the menu. To that end, he said that Canada has been diversifying its partnerships – "different coalitions for different issues based on common values and interests."

In the developing world, Carney's doctrine is as old as time. For decades, emerging powers such as India, Brazil, Indonesia, and others have resisted alliances with great powers, choosing instead to play them off of each other, cooperating where possible and shunning them where necessary. As winds have changed through the years, they have called it non-alignment, multi-alignment, strategic autonomy, and other colourful things.

But for Canada and Europe, such a rationale is revolutionary. For years, these countries have seen the world through the lens of competition between China and the West. The West, led by the United States, was supposed to represent an order based on rules, governing everything – trade and global investment, healthcare and vaccination, clean energy and environmental protection. China and Russia were seen as challenges to those rules, seeking to impose their own standards on the world instead.

Under Donald Trump, the US has abandoned this worldview. Unlike its predecessors, the Trump administration does not see the US as the defender of an old global order or of any rules. To underscore that change, it has already withdrawn from a slew of multilateral institutions, including the World Health Organisation and the UN Panel on Climate Change.

There is another subtler shift. After the end of the Cold War, the US assumed a position of global preeminence. As the largest economy of the world at the time, and its strongest military power, the US saw itself as a nation bestowed with both special privileges and unique responsibilities. Its mandate was to bring an end to the law of the jungle in global geopolitics. International relations were now to be governed by a consensus forged by Washington, with other countries sharing in those gains if they submitted to its rules.

But Trump does not see the US as a special nation with an unparalleled position in world affairs. Instead, he sees the US as one among many global powers, each vying to carve out spheres of influence through military or economic coercion. By this logic, if China is taking Asia and Russia is taking Europe (or at least Eastern Europe), then the US must compete with them – not by objecting to their regional hegemony, but by fortifying the Western hemisphere for itself. This is true multipolarity: Washington now recognises China and Russia as fellow great powers with the right to dominance in their own neighbourhoods, so long as they return the favour in the Americas.

What does this mean for countries that are not great powers?

Emerging nations such as India have been clamouring for multipolarity for years. But this is not the multipolar world they were after. The US-led rules-based order had been a driving force behind the rise and success of many economies in Asia and elsewhere, because those rules had made world affairs relatively more predictable. Businesses could invest, expand, and create jobs because tariff regimes did not change overnight. Global institutions had given voice and a platform to countries that didn't otherwise enjoy material power.

But with no country able or willing to enforce this predictability anymore, the world has now retreated back to the laws of the jungle. In this new paradigm, countries and global businesses can no longer count on the predictability of rules or laws. The only way to preserve yourself is to become strong enough to protect your assets and interests.

To start with, all countries will now have to strive to make their own survival kits. If you are a country that depends on someone else's cooperation for your food, peace or security, then you are already "on the menu", as Carney put it.

SARKARI SECRETS

Who fixes your train fare? And how?

The Indian Railways (IR) ferried more than 700 crore passengers across the country in the year 2024-25. IR's estimated earnings from passenger traffic crossed Rs 75,000 crore. According to the Parliament's Standing Committee on Railways, the managers of the world's fourth largest rail network are aiming at surpassing the magic figure of one billion passengers this fiscal, and earning more than Rs 92,500 crore from them.

Yet, this State-owned enterprise treats the methodology it employs for calculating passenger ticket fares as a *sarkari* secret. Two weeks ago, the Central Information Commission (CIC), appointed to champion the cause of transparency in governance, upheld the denial of this information for the third time.

While deciding a 1.5-year-old appeal, the CIC copy-pasted IR's claim that the "disclosure of pricing-related information is not in the public interest" from its first appellate authority's (FAA) decision, into its own order, without scrutinising it. Trains are the primary means of transport for a very large cross-section of our society, be it for education, work, pleasure, medical treatment or religious purposes. If the transparency of this information is not in the public interest, what else is? How much must the passengers cough up for travel tickets? In fact, this is all that IR disclosed to the woman RTI applicant, initially. Despite receiving a budgetary allocation of Rs 2.5 lakh crore, IR thinks it owes no explanation to taxpayers about its fare-calculation methodology.

The CIC accepted the FAA's 'rationale' that "profit, if any, is distributed/transferred to the common man and is not retained for the benefit of personal gain as in the case of private enterprise" because it is an instrumentality of the State run as a commercial utility.

In its 2023-24 annual report, IR reported a gross profit of Rs 3,259.68 crore. It is silent about how it went about distributing this profit to the "common man". Does investment in the expansion and upgradation of its own infrastructure, introducing high-speed trains with expensive tickets or improving waste management, etc., amount to 'redistributing profit'? Isn't this IR's primary mandate? It certainly does not amount to charity as the FAA's order makes it out to be.

Venkatesh Nayak
wakes up every morning thinking someone somewhere is hiding something

Judicial recognition for the people's fundamental right to know what the government is or is not doing, in their name, dawned 51 years ago. The joint opposition candidate, Raj Narain, sought disclosure of the 'Blue Book' containing detailed instructions for the Prime Minister's security, to challenge Indira Gandhi's election from Rae Bareli, on grounds of corrupt electoral practice. On January 24, 1975, a constitution bench of our Supreme Court directed full disclosure with this reasoning: "In a government of responsibility like ours, where all the agents of the public must be responsible for their conduct, there can but be few secrets. The people of this country have a right to know every public act, everything that is done in a public way, by their public functionaries. They are entitled to know the particulars of every public transaction in all its bearing... To cover with a veil of secrecy the common routine business is not in the interest of the public."

Not only public authorities like IR, but many of our Information Commissions must also urgently go back to understanding these basics. IR has no competitor in the private sector. So, its claim to commercial confidence simply does not fly. Calculating passenger fares is part of its routine business. The exemption that IR claimed and whose applicability the CIC did not question is primarily designed to protect the competitive position of third parties, not a public authority, which has to decide an RTI application.

Thankfully, three days after this order by the CIC, the High Court of Orissa stepped in to correct another error committed by another Information Commission. Last year, the Odisha Information Commission disposed of a bunch of appeals, filed by an aggrieved citizen, through a common order, without directing the disclosure of any of the information sought and after describing them as 'repetitive' in content. Rubbing salt into the wounds, the Commission also barred him from using RTI more than 12 times a year! The court struck down this part of the order, holding that it was unjustified and directed the disclosure of all information sought by the applicant.

Most information commissions have multi-crore annual budgets. Funds must be utilised for educating them about the nitty-gritties of RTI and adjudication. Perhaps it is also time to create effective legal aid mechanisms for aggrieved RTI applicants to challenge their unreasonable orders in court.

OUTSIDE

We are what we notice and what we don't

To notice is to change...' Andy, my student, begins a poem with these words. I'm surprised that such a young person, an undergrad student, has noticed this about noticing. When students enrol for courses in creative practice, whether writing or art or theatre, I imagine that they come to acquire skills, skills that, in shorthand, can be called technique. These are not hard to acquire – soon enough, after they think they have gathered the toolkit, they begin to seek ways that are essential to creativity. That desire comes in various words: 'seeing', 'writing material', even 'vision' and 'philosophy'. At some point, when discussing a punctuation mark in a poem, one of them will say it aloud in a mix of curiosity and exasperation – 'But how does one notice these things?' In some other location, an old school friend will say something similar: 'We went to the same school and college and grew up in the same town. How do you notice this heart-shaped hole that's broken from a wall, but I don't?'

I report this not as self-praise but to summarise the obvious – what we notice and what comes to exist in the realm of our neglect gives our intelligence and spirit its personality.

Such an intuitive understanding of this lineage erupts through various words. One of them, for instance, is 'register'. It could be something as simple as 'She didn't register my presence...' Like many of this tradition of noticing, they come from a recording of some kind of permanence, such as a script. 'Register' is both noun and verb – what has been registered must be recorded in a register, a piece of writing stationery, something like a logbook. One of these is something that has, in places like India, been called the 'attendance register'. It's a ready-made category that gathers mass in our lives as soon as we enter school, and stretches till its end, stalking our work life. This bureaucratic word, which is all outside, a record of our public and institutional presence, brings two words that derive from our deeply interior lives: 'attendance', from 'attend', the same root as 'attention'; 'register', an impress made on our consciousness.

Sumana Roy
is an author and poet. Her books include *How I Became a Tree* and *Provincials*

How these words, coming from a mental climate that resists calibration, that is outside prediction and any kind of assurance that comes from the possibility of history repeating itself, came to grow a cell membrane and stand in for a bookkeeping world is a thing of wonder – not only of how words migrate through time but a speculation about consciousness itself. When did we begin to notice ourselves noticing? When did we think it important to preserve this act of noticing? Why did we let this internal record of noticing transmogrify into something surveillant and puritanical? For what else is the journey of 'attention' to 'attendance register'?

Or the movement from 'noticing' to 'notice board'? If the attendance register records footfall, the notice board is meant to be a magnet for the eye. It's a device located at a site to catch the attention of passersby, a grazing ground for the eye to settle as it hovers everywhere, even though it intends to rest. Once it's caught the attention of a reading person, it behaves like a germ, refusing to leave our system until sleep or a new notice board chases it out. What we notice changes us. And notice boards, do they change us too?

'But we must notice – /we are designed for the moment.' These are the last words Robert Lowell writes in his poem 'Notice'. It's a deeply moving summation of what has been given to us in the lines preceding this: *'The resident doctor said,/"We are not deep in ideas, imagination or enthusiasm—/how can we help you?"/I asked,/"These days of only poems and depression—/what can I do with them?/ Will they help me to notice/what I cannot bear to look at?"* I re-read Lowell and wonder whether we notice them more, what we cannot bear to look at. I'm old enough to know that it's not I-think-therefore-I-am that has produced what I now find myself to be. Like everyone else, I am who I have turned out to be because of what I noticed and what I didn't. We are notice boards – an accretion of everything we have noticed. 'We are designed' to be.

THE DIGITAL ALARMIST

Global ambition, westward drift

When the Donald Trump administration talks about 'civilisational erasure' in Europe because of the EU's immigration policies, it is trying to get the European countries to become a right-wing, xenophobic, and Christian white nationalistic monolith, patterned after Trump's vision for America.

Conveniently left out in the discussion is the fact that the colonialist powers, the United States included, systematically erased the civilisations and cultures of many countries in Latin America, South and Southeast Asia, and Africa over the past 600 years. What is happening today is not so much a civilisational erasure as a technological erasure, across the globe, engineered by Silicon Valley companies. When nation-states attempt to rein in these companies by taxing them or levying huge fines for monopolistic behaviour, the US is always ready to impose sanctions on the 'offending' countries. Size matters as does military might.

Not too long ago, Prime Minister Modi bemoaned the slavish mentality of the Indian public and fervently hoped that this mindset could be gotten rid of in the next ten years. Easier said than done, especially when Modi himself caved in to the demands of the Trump administration that the country suffer the economic impact of the 50% tariff on all Indian exports to the US and stop buying oil from Russia. He allowed the US to send back hundreds of shackled Indian migrants to India on US Air Force planes, which were allowed to land at Indian air bases.

This mentality becomes clear when one takes a close look at how the IT sector (this includes the national institutes of technology and science) and the defence sector in India operate. The two sectors are reliant on overseas technology, irrespective of whether the countries involved are the US, the UK, Russia, France or Israel. In times of crises, be they political, economic or military, these countries would have no hesitation in cutting off support, technical or otherwise, and even sabotage, using the tools of cyberwarfare, GPS in particular, the information and defence infrastructure, since their larger interests have always lain elsewhere. China, on the other hand, has had a robust and longstanding policy of not relying on Silicon Valley, the Pentagon, Whitehall or Red Square for its IT and defence needs.

Roger Marshall
is a computer scientist, a newly minted Luddite and a cynic

If you look at the business of arms procurement in India, you will be struck by the incontrovertible fact that all the technologically sophisticated weaponry is being supplied by the west and Russia. India touts its Tejas light combat aircraft, but producing swords when the opponents are busy manufacturing machine guns is absurd. Moreover, it points to the dearth of engineering talent despite the country churning out hundreds of thousands of engineers each year.

The IT sector, spearheaded by just three companies – Infosys, TCS, and Wipro – which do all the bookkeeping work for businesses, mostly in the US but some in Europe and the UK, involves writing rudimentary software, and there is nothing significantly creative or innovative about this kind of work. The operating systems and programming languages in support of such software were all created in the US, but not necessarily by Indian software professionals, the ones who went to the US on hard-to-get H1B visas. Many of these code jocks spent family fortunes credentialing themselves by obtaining degrees in IT and computer science at various national, regional, and foreign institutes of technology.

There have been many reported instances of parents selling their family real estate holdings to enable their offspring to become certified as software developers and, hopefully, obtain employment at western multinational companies, preferably in the US, but Canada, Australia or the UK would do as well.

If India does possess a huge pool of IT talent, as is often claimed by politicians and the media alike, a claim that I utterly dismiss, why is it that no innovative piece of software in whatever field (search engines, social media, scientific software, natural language translation, etc.) has ever come out of the country and widely adopted across the world? It took Google fifteen short years to provide automatic language translation software for a number of Indian languages. No Indian company or linguistics expert was involved in this effort.

India's rise as a global power will hinge on the shift it brings to its ethos. A fundamental question remains – for India and Indians, why is the grass always greener on the other side?

DHARMA

How Shankara became a mythic hero

Devdutt Pattanaik
works with gods and demons who churn nectar from the ocean of Indian, Chinese, Islamic, Christian, even secular mythologies

Adi Shankara lived in India in the 8th century before the Muslim conquest of India. His hagiographies were written between the 14th and 18th centuries, after the Muslim conquest of India, within Brahmin monasteries of the Vijayanagara and Nayaka kingdoms. These were rediscovered in the 20th century and made part of the nationalist mythology, with Shankara being projected as the man who spiritually united India, who kicked out Buddhism, and who had the foresight of a Muslim invasion, hence initiating the military gymnasium or *akhara* culture. The Shankara legend is less about history and more about imagination – how India turned a philosopher into a divine hero, a world conqueror, and a unifier of its sacred geography.

The hagiographies – *Shankaravijayas* or "Victories of Shankara" – were written centuries after his time. They were composed by scholars and poets who wanted to celebrate him as an incarnation of Shiva and the restorer of Vedic truth. The earliest among them, Anantanandagiri's *Shankaravijaya* (c. 14th century), portrays Shankara as a divine teacher who begins his journey from Kaladi in Kerala, founds the Sringeri *matha* in Karnataka, installs the goddess Saraswati, and finally merges with Shiva in the Himalayas. His route links south and north India, making his journey both spiritual and territorial.

A century later, Vyāsācala's *Shankaravijaya* (c. 14th-15th century) and Cidvilāsa's *Shankaravijaya-vilāsa* (c. 15th century) turn this story into a grand *digvijaya* – a conquest of the four quarters. Cidvilāsa expands the pilgrimage to include Rameshwaram, Puri, Kashi, Prayag, and Dwaraka, turning Shankara's life into a pan-Indian *tirtha-yatra*. Through these journeys, India itself becomes a sacred body, unified by the wanderings of a single sage.

By the 17th century, the legend took on new poetic and philosophical forms. Rajachudamani Dikshita's *Shankarabhyudaya* (early 1600s), composed in the Tamil court of Thanjavur, presents Shankara's rise (*abhyudaya*) in the style of a royal epic. It mirrors the imagery of kingship, showing how an ascetic can be imagined as a spiritual emperor. Around the same time, Govindanatha's *Shankaracharya-charita* (c. 17th century) retells the southern stories with Kerala flavour, while Tirumala Dikshita's *Shankarabhyudaya* (c. 17th century) focuses on intellectual victory – especially Shankara's debates with Mandana Misra and Visvarupa.

The geography here fades; what matters is the conquest of minds through reason and revelation.

Lakshmana Shastri's *Guru-vamsa-kavya* (c. 17th–18th century) connects Shankara's story to the Sringeri *matha* and its lineage of teachers. It even sends the philosopher to Nepal, where he meets the goddess Siddhesvari and drinks from a miraculous river of buttermilk – a striking example of how local myth and tantric imagination enter the Advaita tradition.

Finally, Madhava's *Shankaradigvijaya* (c. 1650-1800) – attributed to the scholar-statesman Vidyaranya of Vijayanagara – became the most popular and enduring version. It absorbed earlier materials, turning them into one coherent story that covered the entire subcontinent: from Kaladi in the south to Sringeri in the west, to Puri in the east, to Kashi and Kedarnath in the north. This became the definitive "national" version of Shankara's life, symbolising the unity of India under Advaita Vedanta.

Scholars like Jonathan Bader now argue that these works reveal not history but mythic design. Each author reimagined Shankara according to his own region and purpose. Early texts emphasised miracles and divine birth; later ones celebrated philosophical debate and royal imagery. Some rooted him in South India; others made him the spiritual conqueror of all four directions. Together, they transformed a philosopher into a symbol of India – a land bound by sacred geography and divine wisdom. Few refer to the controversial tale of Shankara's birth in the 17th-century *Keralolpatti*, which speaks of how Shankara's widowed mother is accused of wrongdoing until it is argued she carries a divine child, who is Mahadeva incarnate.

Central to this transformation is the idea of the *digvijaya*. Shankara's wandering becomes a sacred conquest where intellect replaces the sword and enlightenment replaces empire. Yet, as Bader notes, his victories are never merely intellectual. In the famous debate with Mandana Misra, victory is granted by the goddess Saraswati, whose garland fades around the defeated scholar's neck. This scene captures an important truth of Indian thought: reason alone cannot reveal the divine; it must be blessed by grace.

The hagiographies also reveal the gendered depth of the tradition. Though the Advaita order is monastic and male, the goddess remains central. Shankara installs Saraswati as Sharada at Sringeri and worships Kamakshi at Kanchi, embodying the harmony of knowledge and devotion, intellect and compassion. Even the austere philosopher bows to the feminine source of wisdom.

Shankaravijayas are cultural mirrors. Through them, medieval India turned metaphysics into mythology, geography into theology, and a wandering monk into a divine pilgrim-king.

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION: **DEEPAK HARICHANDAN**

Every January, urban India resolves to walk more, chasing the 10k-step goal. Then reality intervenes. Broken footpaths, parked bikes, speeding cars and stray dogs quickly derail good intentions. Our cities remain deeply hostile to walkers. So what is the solution? Walk-first street design? Better public transport? Laws that put people before vehicles? Suruchi Kapur Gomes speaks to experts

No place for Pedestrians?

The stage is dust-ridden. Pollution hangs like a grim curtain as pedestrians heave and sigh, searching for a footpath, that oh-so-mythical creature, often broken into scrappy remnants, like a flailing lizard's tail. In India, footpaths are either missing or unsafe. Roads are death knells to cross. The right to walk is not explicitly recognised as a fundamental constitutional right, even as Article 21 guarantees the right to life and liberty.

Navigation apps routinely recommend walking routes without accounting for safety. In Bengaluru, for instance, mapping platforms frequently suggest walking as the fastest option, despite broken or missing footpaths, a risk borne entirely by the pedestrian. The absence of reliable public transport and safe last-mile connectivity compounds the problem.

Humans walk. It is one of the most basic expressions of being alive — one foot after the other. When this most elemental act is taken away, progress itself falters. Cartoonist Paul Fernandes captures it succinctly: "Walking is what makes our cities what they are; without that, there is no city."

A growing health crisis

India faces a growing crisis of non-communicable diseases. Public-health experts consistently emphasise that daily physical activity, including walking, plays a crucial preventive role. Yet in most Indian cities, the oft-cited goal of 10,000 steps a day remains aspirational rather than achievable.

Urban planners internationally view pedestrian infrastructure as non-negotiable. Cities such as London and New York, despite congestion, are walkable because footpaths, crossings, and public transport are treated as core infrastructure, not optional add-ons. In India, walking remains marginal in mobility plans. Various assessments, including global walkability studies and Indian urban audits, consistently place Indian cities near the bottom, though precise global rankings vary by methodology. Mumbai, for instance, routinely performs poorly on walkability indicators, highlighting the gap between Smart City ambitions and lived reality.

Urban blind spot

Former Infosys CFO Mohandas Pai attributes this neglect to structural governance failures. "Our politicians derive power from rural areas. Parliamentary and legislative constituencies are based on population data that is nearly 30 years out of date, so urban areas are ignored," he says.

Bengaluru illustrates the problem starkly. "We never had a full-time mayor. Politicians and bureaucrats fear the post will become too powerful. Governance, roads, footpaths, pedestrian infrastructure, public transport — Bengaluru needs about 15,000 buses. We have roughly 7,000. We have around 100 km of metro, another 100 km under construction, but we need close to 500 km."

There are exceptions. Mumbai's Coastal Road Promenade includes a 7.5-km sea-facing stretch, with approximately 5.25 km opened in August 2025, featuring walking paths, cycle tracks, and recreational areas. Bengaluru's TenderSURE (Specifications for Urban Roads Execution) programme redesigned streets in the Central Business District, prioritising pedestrians and utilities, and later informed Smart Cities street guidelines. Chandigarh's sector-based design and cycle lanes, Kolkata's integrated transport, Panaji's colonial streets and riverfront promenades, Mysuru's low-rise layouts, and Chennai's footpath investments have shown results — yet most remain far from walkable. Most pedestrian-friendly interventions have mixed but visible results. And these remain limited in scale relative to overall urban sprawl.

A daily warzone

Road safety data underline the urgency. According to government-reported figures, India recorded approximately 1,72,890 road accident deaths in 2023. Pedestrians accounted for roughly one-fifth of these fatalities, a proportion that has remained consistent over several years.

The scale is sobering. In absolute numbers, annual pedestrian deaths on Indian roads exceed fatalities reported in several active conflict zones globally, underscoring that Indian streets function as a daily warzone for walkers. The Supreme Court has repeatedly flagged pedestrian safety, including through audits of footpath availability and quality. However, these directives largely remain advisory. "Implementation only happens when rules are mandatory, and accountability is enforced," says Srikanth Viswanathan, CEO of Jana Urban Space Foundation and Janaagraha.

Designed for cars, not people

Urban mobility experts agree that Indian roads are engineered for vehicles, not humans. Santhosh Loganaathan, who has worked on walkability projects across Tamil Nadu, notes: "India has among the highest pedestrian death rates globally. Attempts to redesign roads without prioritising pedestrians are a fundamental part of the problem. Footpaths are a default globally, not here."

Indian Road Congress (IRC) guidelines mandate continuous, unobstructed footpaths —1.8 metres wide in residential areas and 2.5 metres in commercial zones — with pedestrian crossings every 200 metres. These standards are routinely ignored.

Dr Rutul Joshi of CEPT University is blunt: "Pedestrians are not the priority. In India, you walk at your own risk."

Medical professionals see the consequences daily. Dr Thomas Kishen, a spine surgeon at Apollo Hospital, recalls treating a 70-year-old patient who fell into an uncovered drain on a poorly lit footpath, suffering a brain bleed and cervical spine injury. She avoided surgery but was bedridden for weeks.

Walk at your own risk

India has no national pedestrian act. While courts have linked safe walking conditions to Article 21, there is no statutory framework assigning accountability. "No department has ever been penalised for violating pedestrian norms," says Loganaathan.

The Institution for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP)'s Streets for People programme shows how inconsistent funding undermines progress. Chennai's pedestrian budgets have fluctuated sharply — from Rs 90 crore to Rs 2 crore, then up again — demonstrating how gains erode without sustained commitment. "Indians walk because they have no choice, and many die doing so," says Aswathy Dilip of ITDP.

> **Urban planners internationally view pedestrian infrastructure as non-negotiable. Cities such as London and New York, despite congestion, are walkable because footpaths, crossings, and public transport are treated as core infrastructure, not optional add-ons.**

"Our cities are over-engineered and under-designed," says Dr Joshi. Roads are measured in passenger car units per hour, not human safety or comfort. Design expertise within municipal bodies remains scarce, and good design is often dismissed as elitist.

The last mile woe

Walkability cannot exist without public transport. "Public transport complements walkable corridors," says Vivek Menon, co-author of TenderSURE. The model prioritises pedestrians first, public transport next, and private cars last.

Parking policy is another lever. "Globally, parking is priced," Dr Joshi notes. "Fix parking, and walking space improves."

Safe footpaths require integrated utilities. Open stormwater drains covered with loose slabs dominate Indian streets, turning footpaths into hazards. Fully integrated utility corridors cost Rs 20–25 crore per km; without integration, costs drop to Rs 5–8 crore, but safety suffers. TenderSURE's joint-tendering model between municipal bodies and utility agencies addresses this. Bengaluru has implemented over 130 km of TenderSURE-style streets, with additional corridors under construction or planning, according to Jana Urban Space Foundation.

Corruption remains endemic. "Bitumen laying is a money spinner," says Loganaathan, pointing to election-driven resurfacing and substandard materials.

A case study with caveats

Pimpri-Chinchwad is frequently cited as one of India's more progressive urban mobility experiments, offering lessons for other cities, not only in ambition but also in the gaps between policy and practice.

The city's approach is rooted in a Comprehensive Mobility Plan (CMP prepared in 2008 under national urban transport guidelines), which articulated a long-term shift toward sustainable mobility. Subsequent policy documents and non-motorised transport (NMT) strategies developed with partners such as ITDP emphasise a high share of trips by walking, cycling, and public transport over the coming decades, aligning with planning horizons extending to the mid-2030s.

On paper, Pimpri-Chinchwad has backed this intent with money. Independent budget analyses show that the city allocates one of the highest proportions of its urban transport budget in India to sustainable transport modes. In 2024–25, a substantial share of the Urban Transport Fund, variously estimated between roughly one-third and about half, depending on classification, was directed toward footpaths, cycle tracks, and related street infrastructure. This places Pimpri-Chinchwad ahead of many comparable Indian cities in terms of stated financial commitment. However, the emphasis remains uneven.

While spending on non-motorised infrastructure has increased, public transport, particularly bus services, continues to lag behind projected demand. At the same time, road-widening and vehicle-oriented projects still absorb significant capital expenditure, diluting the impact of sustainability-focused investments. Urban mobility experts consistently point to stricter parking management, expanded bus fleets for last-mile connectivity, and universal street accessibility as critical missing links.

Detailed surveys have found that a notable proportion of footpaths, across selected corridors, are present but effectively unusable, underscoring the gap between compliance with drawings and functionality on the ground. The takeaway from Pimpri-Chinchwad is therefore instructive: ambitious targets, progressive policies, and relatively strong budget allocations matter, but they deliver results only when implementation, maintenance, and enforcement are consistent and sustained.

What's the way forward?

Deputy Chief Minister of Karnataka D K Shivakumar told *DHoS:* "To provide walkways to pedestrians is one of the biggest urban challenges today. This is a basic human right and I have instructed all my officers to prioritise it. We are working tirelessly to ensure that all parks and lakes in the city have mandatory walking paths."

Global examples show leadership matters. Paris's shift toward a 15-minute city under Mayor Anne Hidalgo demonstrates what autonomy and vision can achieve. Indian experts argue the 74th Constitutional Amendment must be strengthened to give cities real power. There are signs of movement. Uttar Pradesh's Green Roads Infrastructure Scheme has allocated Rs 4,580 crore across 17 cities for 278 km of urban roads, scaling design-led approaches similar to TenderSURE. The first such road has been completed in Gorakhpur.

Ultimately, India must invest heavily in public transport, but none of it works without walkable footpaths. "Disincentivise private transport only after building trust in public systems," says Viswanathan. "Once people trust that they can live, work, and move safely without a car, walking becomes inevitable and safe."

Until then, India remains a country where people walk because they must, not because they can.

MIXED BAG

***'Mixed Bag' is your Sunday potpourri** — an assortment of snappy articles, engaging ideas and snackable nibbles about this and that, from here and there. Dip in!*

Preserving the 'land of lacquer'

Deep in his heart, Kazuo Yamagishi, a lacquer artist designated a living national treasure of Japan, does not reside in a nondescript beige apartment complex in a packed area of Kanazawa, the capital city of Ishikawa prefecture, on the country's main island. His real home, the one before he was displaced, is captured in a lacquer tray, with delicately carved red lines inlaid with gold and mother-of-pearl stretching across the horizon of its ebony surface.

The work is meant to recall "the quality of the sunset in autumn," he said, the walks he would take along the shore in Wajima, his once-breathtaking small city, as the early evening light shimmered across the Sea of Japan. That was before an earthquake on New Year's Day 2024 washed away his wooden home and studio, as it did those of hundreds of other Wajima artisans at the tip of the Noto Peninsula about two hours north of Kanazawa.

Lacquer artist Kazuo Yamagishi in his studio in Kanazawa, Japan. NYT PIC

The magnitude-7.5 earthquake triggered fires and landslides. Some 60,000 buildings collapsed or were damaged, and more than 240 people died. Vital lifelines — roads, schools and ports — were destroyed, compounded months later by flooding from torrential rains. The quake fractured Yamagishi's shoreline, altering the landscape and leaving some nearby fishing ports dry.

Wajima holds a singular place in the lacquer firmament, prized for its exceptional durability and honed by craftspeople whose family know-how goes back five generations and more. The strength of Wajima-nuri — designated a "traditional craft of Japan" by the government — derives from the sap of the urushi tree, from which lacquer originates, reinforced with fine powdery local clay containing microfossils. Before the quake, most of Wajima's 700 or so artisans had workshops in their homes. "The whole city functioned almost as an interconnecting studio to create its famous lacquerware," said Masami Yamada, the Victoria & Albert Museum's curator of Japanese art, who has visited twice since the disaster.

'Arrival of Spring in Noto' by lacquer artist Shota Teranishi in Wajima, Japan. (NYT PIC)

Today, many craftspeople remaining in Wajima are working out of 85 emergency prefabricated lacquer studios financed by the Japanese government for $8.5 million. More than 3,000 housing units have been built to shelter residents, including artisans, who were previously unemployed. Few of Wajima's 100 or so lacquer companies escaped damage.

It is a slow craft in a fast world, learned through years of hands-on apprenticeships (not YouTube how-to videos). Each piece, including utilitarian bowls, art objects and more, requires more than 100 steps and a retinue of specialists — from shapers of the wooden bases to artisans who apply layers of lacquer to produce a veneer thick enough for artists like Yamagishi to carve or incise. Theories vary about how Wajima became a centre for lacquerware, which dates to the Japanese Jomon period (about 8000 BC to 300 BC). Yugo Okagaki, whose family company Senshudo goes back to the Meiji era (1868 to 1912), said that monks from other prefectures travelled to Wajima's Sojiji Temple, then the head temple for the Soto Zen sect. These monks may have brought Wajima lacquerware back to their monasteries, spurring artisans to migrate to Wajima.

It wasn't until the 20th century that the craft became a vehicle for individual artistic expression. One boundary breaker is Keiji Onihira, whose inspiration comes from the cosmos. In night-sky-black lacquer, he uses gold, silver, crushed shells of quail, white-lipped oyster and South Sea abalone, and other materials to make comets, planets and the aurora borealis streaking across maki-e boxes.

NYT

FEEDBACK
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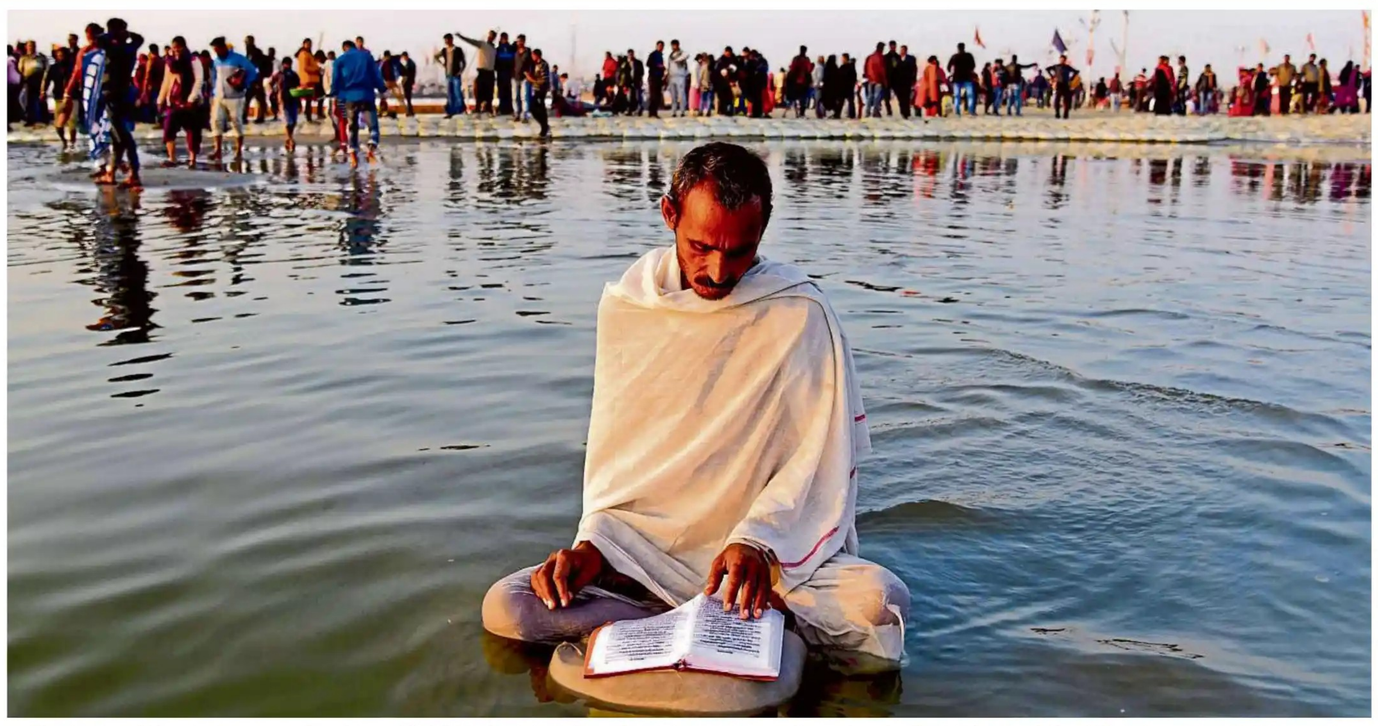
ASTROSPEAK

Guruji Shrii Arnav

Scan the QR code to read the ***weekly horoscope***

Anand Teltumbde's book punctures celebratory narratives around caste enumeration, warning that flawed data and political intent could deepen fissures, writes Sujay B M

CENSUS conundrum



The issue of the caste census has been highly polarising. Seen here is a man reading a book of scripture while sitting in water at Sangam in Prayagraj during Kumbh Mela. (PTI FILE PIC)

Is the census a neutral exercise or inherently political? Is caste data sacrosanct or susceptible to manipulation? Does it dismantle caste structures or reinforce them?? These are some questions that anti-caste proponent and public intellectual Anand Teltumbde poses in his latest work, The Caste Con Census.

The caste census has been highly polarising, with significant sections of the privileged shunning the very idea, while several oppressed communities have welcomed it. The BJP, which historically enjoys strong support from India's upper castes, had slammed it as an "attempt to divide the Hindu society," with PM Narendra Modi himself calling it an "Urban Naxal" idea. On the other hand, top Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has advocated for it and even championed the phrase '*Jitni Abadi Utna Haq*' (the more the population, the more the rights).

This pattern was shaken when the BJP-led NDA government decided on April 30, 2025, to enumerate castes in the upcoming census. While this has widely been celebrated by social justice circles and opposition parties as an ideological win, Teltumbde has ironically questioned the consensus by terming it a con (deceit) census!

The genesis of the book lies in an article Teltumbde wrote in a news magazine recently. The book, though, is a 220-page treatise on the issue, divided into 15 chapters. Teltumbde dips into history and traverses through the development of caste from Vedic to current times.

He is sceptical of the BJP's sudden U-turn, and slams the ruling party's track record in data management. Teltumbde questions the Modi government's claim in 2015 that there were eight crore errors in the Socio-economic caste census (SECC) conducted by the previous UPA regime, by stating that the registrar general and census commissioner of India had claimed that 98.87% of the data on individual caste and religion was "error-free in SECC."

Referring to the stampede at Maha Kumbh Mela earlier this year, the author says the government claimed 29 deaths, while a BBC report pegged it at 82. He feels the privileged among the 'upper' castes will hesitate to participate in the census (a recent instance is Narayana Murthy and Sudha Murty's refusal to participate in the social and educational survey in Karnataka), leaving only the poorer 'upper' castes in the fray. Thus, he contends that the resultant data will be used to show that the 'upper' castes are also backward, and make a case to further establish the reservations for Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) and weaken caste-based reservation. This, he alleges, will be perfectly in sync with the ideology of Sangh Parivar. Known for his bold views and sharp arguments, Teltumbde reiterates that the caste system is rooted in socio-economic and societal relations, which cannot just be fought on ideological grounds. To buttress this, he explains that the Shramanic religions (Jainism and Buddhism), though ideologically opposed to Brahminism, couldn't challenge it structurally. While conceding a demographic shift towards Islam in the medieval times — mainly from amongst oppressed communities — Teltumbde explains that the structural roots of caste remained the same.

Articulating the colonial census as a British ploy to understand Indian society and then control it through its 'divide-and-rule' policy, Teltumbde shows how the colonial regime rigidified caste, with each caste seeking to enumerate itself among those considered 'upper' castes. He feels the reservation scheme in post-colonial India has resulted in a different phenomenon of "competitive victimhood," with each caste trying to claim backwardness for quota benefits.

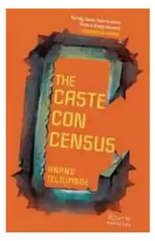
By placing the "annihilation of caste" (as Dr BR Ambedkar put it) as the ultimate goal, the author says: "This is the core argument against the caste census that this book makes. If equality is the aim, a caste census can never deliver it. On the contrary, it risks unleashing caste turbulence, as history shows, which will outweigh potential gains many times."

The principal demand after the caste census (assuming it's accurate) will be a push for a higher reservation share (75% reservation has been Rahul Gandhi's pitch). While it may be argued that this is logical and necessary, Teltumbde juxtaposes this push with neoliberal realities, arguing that the very base for reservation (government and public sector jobs) is being constantly eroded by the neoliberal setup.

Teltumbde's style is lucid, his articulation effective, and his characteristic boldness admirable. His views enrich the debate over the caste census, which has thus far been limited to binaries. While tearing into the BJP's hypocrisy, he questions the intent behind the sudden shift in the Congress' stance, attributing it more to electoral considerations.

Just as in his pioneering work, Iconoclast: A Reflective Biography of Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar, Teltumbde uses his scholarship and insights to question set dictums of the progressive movement. His unflinching commitment to the annihilation of caste and fighting social inequities makes the book a tour de force and a much-needed addition to the burgeoning literature on the caste census. Teltumbde's warnings have been welcomed by social justice adherents, but they have disagreed with his views that the caste census has more cons than pros. While the colonial intent behind the caste census might not have been all kosher, it's also true that the census fuelled anti-caste movements and armed them with empirical evidence.

Critics argue that deliberations about the census in contemporary times have sensitised the public about systemic power asymmetry. Though the book is extensively researched and brilliantly argued, it could've been a tad shorter. That said, it is a must-read for its critical evaluation of the exercise.



THE CASTE CON CENSUS
Anand Teltumbde
Narayana,
pp 256, Rs 499

THAT ONE BOOK

A tale of footsteps and foreboding

The spine-chilling forensic examination of a pathological misogynist and his way of thinking makes this novel an indelible classic of the genre, writes Saudha Kasim

Serial killers seem to be having a cultural resurgence: from Ryan Murphy's TV series to Mammooty's and Madhuri Dixit's recent onscreen turns, storytellers are once again plumbing the dark depths of the human psyche for our entertainment to varying degrees of success.

Last year also saw the publication of Caroline Fraser's non-fiction book, Murderland, which investigated the possibility that lead poisoning in the air in north-west USA might have changed the brain chemistry of men like Ted Bundy, one of 20th century's most prolific serial killers. There has been no conclusive scientific evidence explaining why these killers (the vast majority are men) do what they do, despite attempts to study them (as shown in the excellent David Fincher-produced, but sadly short-lived, *Netflix* series, Mindhunter).

Dorothy B Hughes' classic hard-boiled crime novel, In a Lonely Place, first published in 1947 (a year before Bundy was born), is also about a serial killer, one who is revealed to us pretty early on as the main protagonist, Dix Steele. He has just moved to Los Angeles a couple of years after the end of the Second World War, in which he served as a fighter pilot. Lonely and hard-pressed for money, he's moved into the apartment of an old Princeton acquaintance. He is also stalking and killing women on foggy nights across the city.

Steele's close friend, Brub Nikolai, is a detective in the police department, and as the book begins, the two reestablish contact for the first time in years. (One of the delights of Hughes' work is the names of the characters, one-syllable monikers that are made for noir tales.)

Steele is fascinated to discover Nikolai's profession and, in an effort to get insight into the police investigation into the killings and hoping to stay one step ahead of the cops, tells his friend that he'd like to tag along for research on a book he's supposedly writing. It's a fiction that he's sold to his benefactor, a Scrooge-ish uncle who was responsible for his upbringing. In quite a few serial killer stories, writers do tend to lean heavily on past traumas — often inflicted in childhood — as the root cause of their protagonists' psychopathic tendencies. Hughes doesn't provide Steele with such a backstory — he didn't have a life of privilege, and though he did well in the war, he's shown as being lost once the battles are done with and peace has prevailed.

The poster of the movie adaptation.
(PIC COURTESY: COLUMBIA PICTURES/ WIKIMEDIA)

What is clear, though, is that he needs to control women and has a deep-rooted rage that causes him to lash out when they don't obey.

It's this, the spine-chilling, forensic examination of a pathological misogynist and his way of thinking that makes In a Lonely Place such an indelible classic of the genre. Hughes doesn't dwell on the violence or provide a lurid account of the victims' suffering to build up a feeling of dread in the reader.

Instead, the book stands out from others of its type for the haunting depiction of the lonely streets and neighbourhoods of post-war Los Angeles, the fog so menacing that even though it's decades later, you think you can hear the footsteps of the killer.

Hughes, who was a journalist and poet before she found success as a crime novelist, doesn't romanticise murderers.

At one point, Steele and Nikolai discuss the nature of killers and the detectives who are on their trail: "'The criminal doesn't escape.' Dix smiled wryly. Brub said, 'I won't say that. Although I honestly don't think he ever does escape. He has to live with himself. He's caught there in that lonely place...'"

In a Lonely Place was made into a classic noir film by Nicholas Ray, starring Humphrey Bogart in 1950, and while she was recognised as a master of crime writing in her lifetime, Hughes and her work seem to have faded from view in recent years.

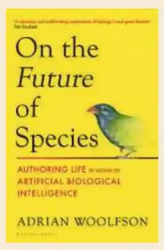
Maybe now, when so many are trying to bring new perspectives and insights into some of the darkest human experiences, is the right time for a Hughes revival. And perhaps we can now appreciate her for the pioneering writer she was.

That One Book *is a monthly column that does exactly what it says — it takes up one great classic and tells you why it is (still) great.*
The author is a writer and communications professional. She blogs at saudha.substack.com

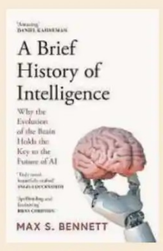
SPEED READS

As AI moves from code to cells, a new crop of books is exploring how machines are reshaping our understanding of life itself. Here are three AI-biology crossover reads minus the jargon:

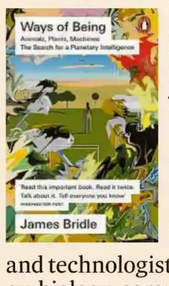
On The Future Of Species by Adrian Woolfson
Leading geneticist Adrian Woolfson argues that AI will soon allow us to design new species, and even rewrite ourselves. The convergence of artificial intelligence and synthetic genomics is already transforming biology. Soon, Woolfson argues, we may be able to design complex organisms from scratch, resurrect extinct species, eliminate disease, and even rewrite the human genome itself.



A Brief History Of Intelligence by Max S Bennett:
As a pioneering artificial intelligence entrepreneur, Max Bennett is well-positioned to bridge the gap between AI and evolutionary neuroscience. In this book, he does exactly that: bridges the gap between AI and neuroscience by telling the story of how the brain came to be. The entirety of the human brain's four-billion-year story can be summarised as the culmination of five evolutionary breakthroughs. Each breakthrough also has fascinating corollaries to breakthroughs in AI.



Ways Of Being: Animals, Plants, Machines by J Bridle:
This engaging, well-reviewed book explores intelligence in a broad sense, not just AI but also the intelligence of biological life and what it means for humans, technology and society. Bridle, a writer and technologist, draws on ecology, biology, computation and culture to challenge human-centric ideas of intelligence. A must-read for the curious.

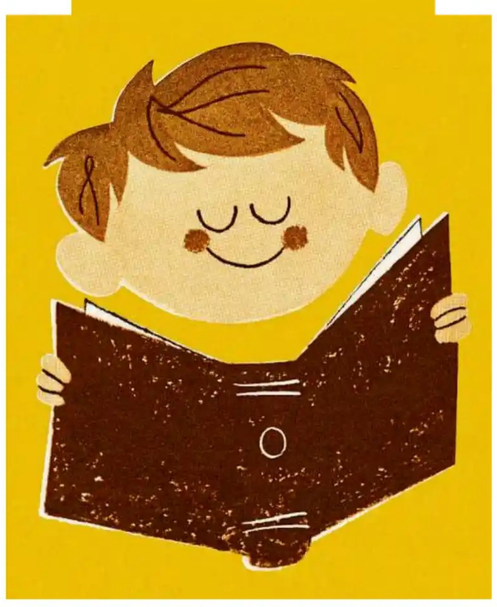


Curated by Rashmi Vasudeva

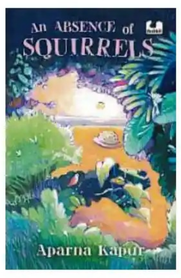
PIQUED

Books that feel like a warm hug

Writing for kids doesn't have to mean resorting to simplification: instead, it could mean leaning into the curiosity of childhood, says Nirica Srinivasan

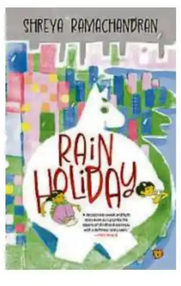


The best kind of children's book is one you can read at any age. Writing for children doesn't have to mean resorting to simplification: instead, it could mean leaning into the openness and curiosity that we associate with childhood; not shying away from the complexity and ambiguity that is part of our everyday lives; and creating work that can grow with readers across their lives.



Some of my favourite books I've read recently have not just been children's books I've revisited from my childhood, but new ones that I've only had the chance to read as an adult — and they've fast become titles I would happily give to any 10-year-old I meet. Two of my favourite chapter books from India recently have been Shreya Ramachandran's **Rain Holiday** and Aparna Kapur's **An Absence of Squirrels**.

In **Rain Holiday**, we meet 11-year-old Rekha. Rekha lives in an "old, rundown building" in Bombay, two roads away from her best friend, Latisha. In their spare time, Rekha and Latisha make up stories about a tall, friendly giant named Mighty, who was born from children's laughter and can navigate the busy city in easy steps. One day, when it's raining heavily enough for the school to declare a holiday, Rekha is excited to meet Latisha — only to find out that her best friend refuses to leave her bedroom.



What follows is a gentle, sweet journey, in which Rekha tries to unravel what's going on with Latisha, while also negotiating the hundreds of new things vying for her attention: the reappearance of her father, the new classmates she befriends to solve the mystery of Latisha, and the secret inner lives of the adults that orbit her life.

Rekha is a delightful character to accompany through these pages: confused, but well-meaning; imaginative and playful; and above all, a really good friend. She is trying her best to keep her anger in check, and she writes down 'feeling-words' her psychiatrist mother encourages her to use in her diary. The adults that populate these pages are three-dimensional and imperfect, and part of Rekha's journey is seeing them for who they are: not black-and-white cut-outs but people with lives and hopes and dreams that really have nothing at all to do with her. There's a lovely gentleness with which Rain Holiday (and Rekha herself) approach the complexity and confusion of sadness and anxiety, and the realisation that the world is much, much bigger than our narrow worldviews. Rain Holiday feels like a hug, a reminder that in cloudy times, you can weather the storm together.

Aparna Kapur's **An Absence of Squirrels** is a touch more fantastical. It takes place on the (fictional) tooth-shaped island of Thutta, which is divided into sectors connected lengthwise by a train track. On this island lives Katli, a 13-year-old who decides, one day, to follow a cat off a train instead of going to school. And then she's on the road to an adventure like no other: the discovery of secret meetings, mind-wiping devices, and a conspiracy that stretches all the way back through Thutta's history. And at the centre of it all is a small animal that Katli has never heard of: something called... a "squirrel"?

An Absence of Squirrels is one of those wonderful books that manages to both tackle illuminating and important themes, and be an undeniably fun, funny adventure to read. Katli's journey leads her to a healthy questioning of what is taken for granted, a new understanding of how histories are written, and a stronger sense of self.

Katli's sense of self is one of my favourite things about An Absence of Squirrels. She creates versions of herself to respond to what the day asks of her: Katli One is happy and carefree; Katli Five is curious; Katli Seven is a risk-taker. Across the book, Katli learns to navigate these personas, learning what it means to be one single Katli.

I can't imagine what it would've been like to read Squirrels and Rain Holiday when I was 10, but I can do the next best thing: enjoy them as an adult, and recommend them freely to kids looking for new reads.

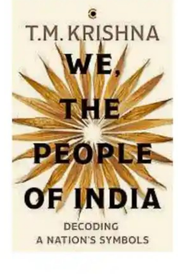
The reviewer is a writer and illustrator.

Piqued *is a monthly column in which the staff of Champaca Bookstore bring us unheard voices and stories from their shelves.*

READ OF THE WEEK

India's independence came at the cost of millions of lives and deep psychological scars. As attempts were made to urgently stitch together the states and princely provinces that would eventually comprise the Republic of India, members of the Constituent Assembly and the newly formed government also debated the symbols — the national flag, anthem, emblem, motto and Preamble — that could represent the free people of the new nation and reinforce in them a sense of their own identity as citizens. Not all of the processes and communications around this passage from idea to symbol were clearly documented. It is this lack of ready historical material that set musician and cultural commentator T M Krishna on a journey of discovery that shaped itself into this book. Through meticulous research and persistent questioning, he found ways to explore the historical, cultural and philosophical contexts of each symbol, revealing how they evolved to become powerful metaphors for a nation's aspirations, struggles and dreams for the future.

T M Krishna is a vocalist in the Karnatik tradition. He was awarded the Sangita Kalanidhi, one of the most prestigious honours in Karnatik music. In 2016, he received the prestigious Ramon Magsaysay Award in recognition of 'his forceful commitment as artist and advocate to art's power to heal India's deep social divisions'.



Promise of 'WHAT-IFS'

TIES AND KNOTS

When we develop feelings for people far away from the lives we otherwise lead, does it signal a small transgression or a mild flirtation with the forbidden, asks Arundhati Ghosh

As the car spiraled down the road, my gaze fell on the rear-view mirror. This time, I locked my eyes into his, and held. This would be our last day in the hills and I had fallen perilously in love with this quiet guide who accompanied us. That he used kohl to line his eyes mattered. I may have been fourteen. Later, I would return home and spend a few wistful evenings wondering if he too thought of me, before school, friends and life took over. But his memory, like the toasted nearness of a bonfire stayed, longer.

Over the years I realised what a 'dil-phenk' I was — giving the heart away easily, often. I had a knack for fantasy romances — not just when I went exploring new and different places, but even at home. I built the most impossible romances with the most peculiar characters in the oddest of situations. And always with the latest film song playing in the backdrop. Odd as it was, checking with friends I soon reckoned I wasn't alone — it was a common adventure of imagination for girls with our middle class, timid lives!

Nothing came off these fantasies. A few furtive glances post the initial frisson, some awkward chatting, and some secret letters apart, there was no scope for more. Mostly there were only long diary entries and nights of being hero-heroines in self-authored narratives playing full blown cinema in our heads. We were too naive to doubt the authenticity of these feelings; and too young to remain hurt from their hasty dissolution.

One would have thought that was that. But even after age and experience have instilled copious amounts of suspicion for impulse, and the necessary weighing of most 'feelings' for their result-oriented contribution to our lives — these pointless sojourns of the truant heart persist in our adult lives.

The holiday romance

I have wondered why some of us are prone to develop feelings for people who are far away from the lives we otherwise lead, especially when we are travelling? Some call this 'holiday romance'. Like wearing traditional clothes of locals and posing for photographs, perhaps this is a way of momentarily stepping into another life — one so remote, so obscure from our real lives that we will never ever think of actually living it. Us being away from home and this unraveling mostly in our heads — it becomes the perfect playground for our guilty desires. Maybe it makes us feel safe in a way our real lives can't — a life we will never actually live can never cause us pain, right? Or perhaps in a world where who we can desire and love is strictly prescribed by social norms with boundaries as battle-lines, these little pretense-play pleasures allow for that tiny taste of transgression, a tentative touch of the forbidden.

Even at the very start of almost all of these affairs of the heart, we are aware that they are relationships that will never be. Either our return home from travels or the inability to find sustainable common grounds eventually prevail. Perhaps it is our longing for the mysteries of the 'incomplete' that bewitch us. Stilled in time, the 'unfinished' has no pressure of culmination to burden the joys of present experience.

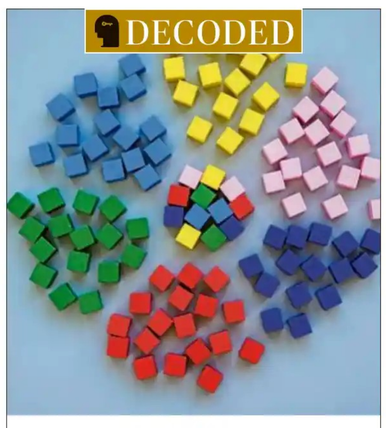
While we think our hearts need maps with destinations and desperately attempt to analyse the road blocks of every relationship that in our view 'is not going anywhere', perhaps what sometimes nourishes our souls is the lightness that comes with an absence of the future, an escape from tomorrow. None of the relationships we actually live give us that. Most are stuck between the binaries of success and failure at the finishing line. This is a bit like the experiences of sexual intimacy — those relentlessly chasing a climax miss the wanderings of the pleasure-plateau and mostly arrive at indifferent endings. But for me what is most beautiful about the 'unfinished' is that it embodies a yearning for return, the greed for a little more, the desire for another chance. The unfinished always holds the promise of a 'what if', a land of eternal spring that overshadows present disappointments. Knowing fully well that we never will, we crave to live that life, in those moments, a while longer. Sometimes the heart aches just to signal its presence.

What detours do to us

At another time, in another world, this could have been different — we think. Some of us return from these detours with a deeper understanding of home — while others realise how fragile, how breakable home can be. There is another realisation. At times all you can do for those you deeply feel for is to wish them well in their lives, far from you. Nothing teaches this better than falling in love with people we will never meet again. But the buoyancy of our hearts in the presence of such feelings is magical. And we all have a right to float.

(This column navigates the various worlds of entangled relationships attempting to celebrate, cope with, and reimagine the meanings of our connections. The author is a writer, cultural practitioner, social activist, and traveller. All Our Loves: Journeys with Polyamory in India is her first book in English, published by Aleph in 2025.)

FEEDBACK
Have something to say? Send your feedback and suggestions to arufeedback @gmail.com



Intersectionality AND IDENTITIES

Intersectionality as a concept first entered feminist and gender narratives following a paper by legal scholar Kimberle Crenshaw in 1989. The term, 'intersectionality' is used to describe a scenario where gender, age, religion, class, race, and neurodiversity among others overlap and interact with gender. Think of a Venn diagram, where all the different identities are circles, and they converge at some points.

Gender intersectionality refers to the ways in which gender interacts or intersects with other identities, such as race or religion rather than a one-dimensional way of looking at inequalities within the gender space.

For the LGBTQIA+ community, intersectionality helps in identifying points of convergence and divergence; it helps individuals see each other as layered and complex people, wherein they experience different aspects of their personalities at the same time. An example of intersectionality in the LGBTQIA+ umbrella is when you could identify as trans and lesbian, at the same time. LGBTQIA+ people could also have other identities of race or class, and they can intersect.

Understanding intersectionality helps because it can usher in policy changes and a greater sense of empathy for people with complex and multiple identities.

Curated by Savitha Karthik

*(**Decoded** is a column that demystifies gender concepts and breaks them down into easy-to-understand language.)*

Travel

Charming cobble-stoned alleys, iconic cultural institutions, and world-class entertainment and shopping make Pasadena a must-visit, writes Pallavi Mehra

It's all roses in PASADENA

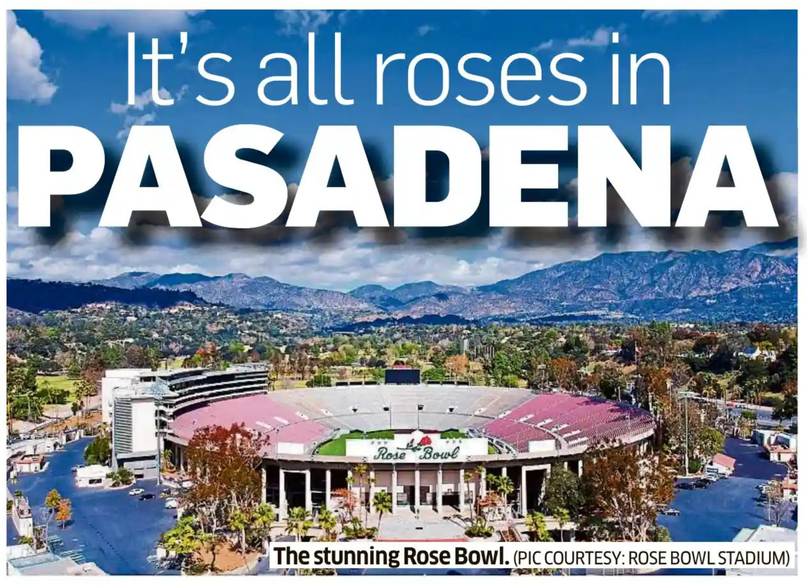
A few months ago, I visited Pasadena, a vibrant city in Los Angeles County. Located northeast of downtown Los Angeles, it is home to historic architecture, verdant gardens, and one-of-a-kind cultural institutions. Here is your guide to this underrated Californian city.

Soak in the art and architecture

The Huntington, which has been rebranded from the Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Garden, provides visitors with a rare mix of culture and natural beauty. Stroll through over a dozen themed gardens, tour the art galleries, and dive into literary history, all set on a sprawling estate. The Huntington's serene Japanese Garden, Chinese Garden, Desert Garden, and Rose Garden are must-visits.

A short drive away, the Norton Simon Museum is home to a vast collection of artworks by renowned European artists, including Degas, Van Gogh, and Rembrandt. However, what truly sets it apart is its wide range of South and Southeast Asian art. This range, one of the largest of its kind outside of Asia, will enable Indian travellers to view spectacular sculptures and artifacts from their own heritage in a whole new context.

Architecture lovers should not miss The Gamble House, an excellent example of the American Arts & Crafts movement. Built in 1908 by architects Charles and Henry Greene, the home was featured in the beloved film, 'Back to the Future'. Constructed for David and Mary Gamble of the Procter & Gamble fame, it is a local, state, and national historic landmark.



The stunning Rose Bowl. (PIC COURTESY: ROSE BOWL STADIUM)

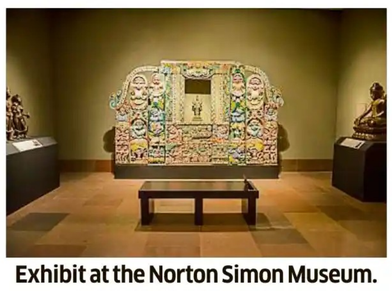


Exhibit at the Norton Simon Museum. (PIC COURTESY: VISIT PASADENA)

Explore estates and gardens

A drive down Pasadena Millionaires' Row Drive exhibits a time when the city was a winter playground for America's industrial magnates. The bungalows, with their century-old facades, showcase the city's rich heritage and architectural legacy. The Wrigley Mansion, now the headquarters of the Tournament of Roses, is a standout. The Tournament of Roses is well-known for its Rose Parade, featuring floral floats, marching bands, and equestrian units, followed by the Rose Bowl college football game, held on New Year's Day. Just outside Pasadena, the Descanso Gardens is a tranquil botanical sanctuary. With a serene Japanese garden perfect for some quietude, an age-old oak forest that feels untouched, and vibrant floral displays, Descanso is the ideal spot to be one with nature.

Indulge in retail therapy

Pasadena's shopping destinations are a chic alternative to the hustle and bustle of Downtown Los Angeles. South Lake Avenue and One Colorado offer a beautifully landscaped outdoor shopping experience, mixing high-end stores and designer boutiques with coffee shops and shaded promenades. For a quieter, more curated experience, visit Playhouse Village, home to locally owned stores and the Vroman's Bookstore—a literary destination where one could get lost for days. No luxury shopping experience in California would be complete without checking out Erewhon, an upscale grocery store that has become an Internet sensation. The Pasadena location is one of its largest in Los Angeles County; visiting Erewhon is a quintessential Californian experience.

Check out the entertainment scene

The hub of Pasadena's cultural landscape is the Pasadena Playhouse, one of the United States' most well-loved regional theatres. The Playhouse hosts Broadway-quality productions in an elegantly restored 1920s building. The building itself is an architectural masterpiece, and the experience feels both cosy and luxurious.

Experience the Rose Bowl vibes

Pasadena's Rose Bowl stadium is also worth checking out. While it is known for the annual Rose Bowl game, this national historic landmark also hosts NFL Super Bowls, soccer matches, concerts by music legends, and food markets.

Even if you're not a sports enthusiast, a public tour of the stadium will give you a glimpse of its history, including access to the original 1922 locker room and the press box. The impressive size and historical significance of the venue, surrounded by the majestic San Gabriel Mountains, make it a truly breathtaking sight.

Chester County in Pennsylvania feels like a portal into an episode of Stranger Things minus the Demogorgons, writes Nainaa Rajpaal

Tapping into American nostalgia

You know that moment when you pull into a place and it just feels like America? Not the one with subways and skyscrapers. But the one that lives in old VHS tapes, rock 'n' roll songs and Archie comics. The quintessential America of the '70s and '80s.

The moment I landed at the Philadelphia airport, it felt like I was being ushered back in time. None of the "hurry up and move" immigration you brace for at other airports.

As we drove to the countryside, flashes of red-brick houses whizzed past me. Tom Jones blared 'American Girl' and I pulled down the window and let the crisp summer air in. I spotted fathers teaching their daughters to play baseball, with red, white and blue fluttering in the wind above.

Horses and whodunnits

I've often wished I could walk straight into an episode of 'Stranger Things', minus the Demogorgons, thank you very much. Chester County, Pennsylvania, was that portal for me.

My first stop was the Devon Horse Show & Country Fair. Started in 1896, it's the oldest and largest outdoor multi-breed horse competition in the US. The riders rode like they'd stepped out of an old Marlboro ad.

Kids in denim jackets ran past me, clutching yellow lemon sticks - the county's sweet summer tradition. I half expected them to hop on bikes and pedal off to investigate a mystery.

Chester County has been the backdrop of movies like 'Marley & Me' and 'The Village', thanks to its easy nostalgia.

Giant mushrooms

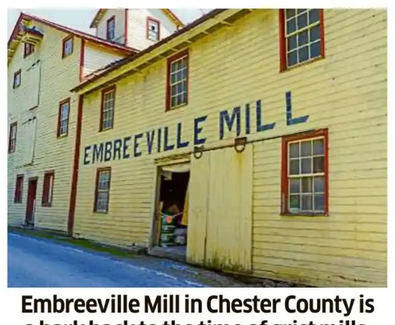
And then there was Kennett Square, known as the Mushroom Capital of the World. I rolled into town, wondering how a single vegetable could become its symbol.

Kennett Square was full of markets piled high with fresh portobellos and shiitakes. There were enoki with their snow-white caps, earthy cremini, and even exotic varieties like lion's mane and maitake. Locals wander from stall to stall, swapping recipes for mushroom risotto or cream of mushroom soup. That's when I saw a board that read 'Come taste our mushroom ice cream'. Did I dare? Curiosity got the better of me. The scoop in my hand looked harmless enough, fluffy cream with tiny brown flakes.

The first bite was...unexpected. Earthy, fudge-like, with a subtle sweetness that grew on me the more I tasted. By the third spoonful, I was oddly hooked.

The thing about America is that it's never afraid to take things too far! Kennett Square even hosts a "mushroom drop" on New Year's Eve instead of a ball.

Longwood Gardens, Pennsylvania.



Embreeville Mill in Chester County is a hark back to the time of grist mills.

One of the crown jewels of Kennett Square is Longwood Gardens. In the year 1906, industrialist Pierre du Pont purchased a small farm here to save a collection of historic trees from being sold for lumber, a decision that blossomed into the 1,100-acre masterpiece we see today. It sprawls woodlands, meadows and its most celebrated feature – fountains. Longwood Gardens is home to more fountains than any other garden in the United States. On schedule, the fountains jumped to life, and I was lucky enough to see it sway its hips to Taylor Swift's 'Shake it Off', much to the delight of hundreds of families gathered at sunset.

Before leaving, I wandered into the Brandywine River Museum of Art, housed in an old mill, on the banks of the Brandywine River. On display here are NC Wyeth's bold illustrations, which once brought 'Treasure Island' and 'Robin Hood' to life for American kids in the early 1900s. As I left the County, I felt like I was carrying the charms of small town America home with me.

Fresh look at all-day dining

Star hotels are experimenting with curated menus and interactive elements at their all-day dining restaurants. Are these generating buzz or should the original format play to its strengths — that of dependability and comfort, wonders
Ruth Dsouza Prabhu

Once looked at as a place for special occasions only, star hotel all-day dining restaurants are a go-to for everything, from power-packed corporate dealings to match-making bids and celebrating a milestone.

Largely following a familiar format of an à la carte menu with a set of popular dishes like biryanis, sandwiches, pasta and burgers, and buffets for breakfast, lunch and dinner, all-day dining restaurants have long since been considered the predictably reliable hallmark of hotels. However, they are evolving.

With standalone outlets working with far more agility when it comes to their offerings and visibility, hotels have to keep pace. In response, some are eschewing the standard buffet for more curated offerings like prix fixe menus, and others are introducing interactive elements to engage diners. But are these efforts enough to generate some excitement—or is the original format's strength still in its comfort and reliability?

Coastal South Indian ensemble is one of the three-course meal offerings at Lapis, Bengaluru.

À la carte menus

At The Oberoi, Bengaluru, Lapis, the all-day dining restaurant, the weekday buffet has been discontinued in favour of an à la carte one showcasing three-course meals. Guests can choose dishes from Amritsar, coastal South India, Tuscany, the Levantine and Basque country, each with dedicated vegetarian and meat options. "These regions are all defined, and the choice of dishes from them allows diners to explore well-researched, wholesome food which goes beyond standard multi-cuisine restaurant menus but stop short of a speciality cuisine outlet," explains Anirban Dasgupta, Executive Chef, The Oberoi, Bengaluru.

Other hotels too, have made changes. At The Ritz-Carlton, Bengaluru's The Market, the dinner buffet has been replaced with an à la carte menu where every meal is pre-plated. "There's a noticeable shift from consumption to curation, and guests now value authenticity, provenance, and the kind of culinary narrative that transforms a meal into an experience," believes Pattabiraman A, Director of Food and Beverage, The Ritz-Carlton, Bengaluru.

Interactive elements

At the Sheraton Grand Palace Indore, an all-vegetarian hotel, the standard Sunday buffet spread at S Cafe now has an interactive element. Locally sourced and exotic ingredients are displayed for guests to choose and have them custom-cooked. In demand are street-style tawa preparations, tandoor roasts, stir-fries with regional Indian spices and gravies, all in keeping with the city's penchant for favouring Indian food while dining out.

European favourites at The Oberoi's Bengaluru restaurant.

Salads at the restaurant in Sheraton Grand Palace, Indore.

Aslam Gafoor, Bengaluru-based hospitality professional, says that the novelty in all-day dining is also built in through small, deliberate touches— curated buffets during off-peak hours, interactive open kitchens, greater emphasis on locally sourced ingredients and regional specials. "However, some lifestyle hotels are experimenting more boldly. AnnaMaya at Andaz Delhi blends an artisan market with a restaurant, and Soho House Mumbai's all-day café model feels closer to a standalone restaurant," Gafoor adds.

For these restaurants, it comes down to balancing novelty with their no-fail predictability. Some may opt for small, yet thoughtful touches like the chef's special pass-around service during breakfast at Long & Short Bistro at the InterContinental Marine Drive, Mumbai or may introduce programmes like Aujasya by The Leela, a wellness initiative, where specially curated health-focused dishes are woven into the breakfast à la carte and buffet offerings.

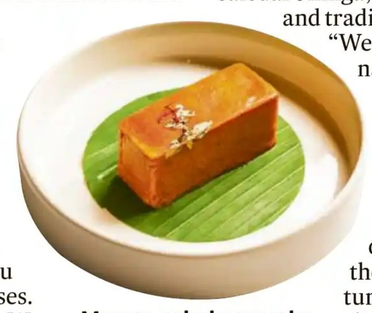
"We want to change the paradox of all-day dining spaces being perceived as elevated banquet halls with predictable food," says Dasgupta. "At Lapis, we continue to tweak operationally. For example, at first, guests had to navigate a huge à la carte menu to choose their three courses. This was time-consuming. We curated four set menus, and the response improved," Dasgupta explains.

Tiger prawn and hass avacado aguachile on The Ritz-Carlton's dining menu.

Quest for elevated experiences

Bengaluru-based Debolina Ray, food and travel blogger, feels that today, hotel restaurant prices are competitive and comparable to many standalone places, so guests expect an elevated experience. "A challenge is that hotel restaurants don't always advertise or market themselves as actively as standalones, and that visibility is key to attracting diners, in-house and local guests. In Bengaluru, the choice for a night out may be Toit or Olive Beach, but not a hotel bar, unless it has a separate identity like Copitas of Four Seasons Hotel Bengaluru or ZLB23 at The Leela Palace Bengaluru, which have each built a distinct brand identity, with guest shifts, independent social media marketing or via events and collaborations. When hotels offer quality and creative experiences, they attract in-house guests and become dining destinations for the city's locals," she adds.

"For Pune locals, the restaurant has become a point of pride, a place to bring guests and share dishes that are deeply rooted in the region's heritage," says General Manager, Supreet Roy, of their all-day dining restaurant Feast at the Sheraton Grand Pune Bund Garden Hotel. He was inspired by his own travels and culinary expectations to add a Maharashtrian section to the standard buffet in 2023. Kolhapuri cooks make local delicacies like Saoji Chicken, Tambda and Pandhara Rassa, Kolhapuri Mutton and Masaledar Jhinga, using freshly ground spices and traditional methods. The result?



Mysore pak cheesecake at The Ritz-Carlton's Bengaluru restaurant.

"We found domestic and international guests gravitating towards the Maharashtrian counter, often with a steaming cup of Puneri Chai (a strong, milky tea). They ask questions while watching Bhakri being made and are drawn to the simplicity of these family recipes. Several returning international corporate clients say they enjoyed discovering hyper-local dishes at this counter," Roy explains.

Changes, yes, but enough?

Hotels are responding to market dynamics, and the constant demand for something new. As we future-gaze, changes in all-day dining offerings may seem few and far between, but it hasn't gone unnoticed among guests.

"Pass-arounds, pre-plated meals, cafe-style set-ups, live counters with local dishes—as a diner, I appreciate these changes. They make the experience feel more curated and premium rather than formulaic," says Ritcha Verma, Co-founder, 11 Eleven Communications, Mumbai, a regular guest at the city's star hotel all-day dining restaurants. "Personally, I expect consistency in food and service when dining with clients, because reliability matters. When with family and friends, my expectation shifts to wanting a mix of global cuisines, live counters, great desserts, and drinks so everyone feels indulged. I look for a place that's equal parts dependable and aspirational," she says.

"Dependability is the all-day dining restaurant's biggest strength. Guests know they can get breakfast in the morning or a club sandwich at midnight. While buffets still have a stronghold in leisure-heavy destinations like Goa, Jaipur, and Kochi, many city hotels are moving away from sprawling, one-size-fits-all spreads. Occupancy numbers, operational costs and food waste are some major factors," says Gafoor.

It is interesting times for the diner who knows that if the urge for a lamb burger and coffee hits at midnight, a star hotel's all-day dining will not disappoint. Yet, if one wants to sample an à la carte or prix fixe, or know a new city by the classics on a menu, all-day dining is still the answer.

QUICK TAKES

- All-day dining menus of star hotels offer reliability and familiarity.
- They follow a standard format of an à la carte menu with a set of dishes, and buffets.
- Star hotels are responding to market dynamics and demand for newness.
- Pass-arounds, pre-plated meals, live counters are some examples of change.

THYROID TESTING: Hits and misses

Thyroid function is dynamic and influenced by factors like testing practices, timing and autoimmune activity. Many disorder symptoms also overlap with other conditions like stress or lifestyle-related fatigue, leading to misdiagnosis, writes
Dr Abhijit Bhograj

The thyroid gland produces hormones that influence metabolism, mood, digestion, and a range of other functions.

The thyroid gland may be small, but its impact on the human body is extensive. Positioned at the front of the neck, this butterfly-shaped gland produces hormones that influence metabolism, heart rate, digestion, mood, fertility, and temperature regulation. When thyroid function shifts even slightly, the effects can be felt across multiple organ systems.

Despite the widespread availability of blood tests and growing public awareness, thyroid disorders remain among the most commonly misdiagnosed endocrine conditions. Endocrinologists point out that this is not due to a lack of testing, but often because thyroid function is dynamic, influenced by medication adherence, testing practices, autoimmune activity, and timing.

THYROID AWARENESS MONTH

While hypothyroidism and hyperthyroidism appear distinct, endocrinologists emphasise that real-world presentations are rarely textbook. Many symptoms overlap with stress, mental health disorders, ageing, or lifestyle-related fatigue, leading to frequent diagnostic confusion.

The overlooked middle

One of the biggest reasons for thyroid misdiagnosis lies in the assumption that thyroid tests are static and absolute. In reality, thyroid hormones fluctuate, especially in autoimmune thyroid disease. Patients with thyroid antibodies may move between normal, borderline, and abnormal values over weeks or months. Testing during one of these transitional phases may produce misleading reassurance or unnecessary alarm.

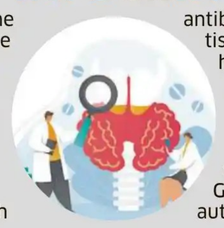
This is particularly relevant in individuals who have:

- Positive thyroid antibodies but normal hormone levels
- Early or evolving autoimmune disease
- Recently started or inconsistently taken thyroid medication

Endocrinologists often see patients tested too frequently, sometimes every few weeks, without allowing enough time for the body to reach hormonal equilibrium. Thyroid hormone levels, especially TSH, take several weeks to stabilise after any dose change. Frequent testing can create the illusion of instability where none truly exists.

HYPO OR HYPER

Hypothyroidism occurs when the thyroid gland does not produce adequate hormones. Patients commonly experience fatigue, weight gain, cold intolerance, dry skin, constipation, hair thinning, menstrual irregularities, and low mood. The most frequent cause is Hashimoto's thyroiditis, an autoimmune condition in which



antibodies gradually damage thyroid tissue. Hyperthyroidism, on the other hand, results from excess thyroid hormone production. Symptoms include unintentional weight loss, palpitations, tremors, heat intolerance, anxiety, increased sweating, and sleep disturbance. Graves' disease is the most common autoimmune cause.

Testing errors, lab variability

Another underappreciated issue is laboratory variability. Not all labs follow uniform calibration protocols, and reference ranges may differ between centres. A patient testing at different laboratories may see fluctuating reports despite no true change in thyroid status.

Timing matters

When blood samples are drawn from patients in certain scenarios, they may show misleading results.

These scenarios include:

- Missed doses
- Taken medication incorrectly
- Changed brands
- Tested too soon after starting or stopping treatment

The situation becomes even more complex when patients change doctors frequently, resulting in different interpretations of the same data without longitudinal context.

Single test not helpful

Many diagnoses are based solely on TSH levels. While TSH is a sensitive screening marker, it does not always reflect the full picture. Early disease, autoimmune activity, and central thyroid disorders may be missed if free T4, free T3, and antibody testing are not considered when clinically appropriate. Endocrinologists stress that thyroid disease cannot be reduced to a single number. Symptoms, trends over time, medication history, antibody status, and clinical judgement must all be integrated.

Why accurate diagnosis matters

Untreated hypothyroidism can worsen cholesterol levels, increase cardiovascular risk, impair fertility, and significantly affect quality of life. Undiagnosed hyperthyroidism raises the risk of arrhythmias, bone loss, muscle wasting, and emotional instability.

Equally important is the psychological impact. Many patients feel dismissed when symptoms persist despite "normal" reports. This disconnect between lived experience and laboratory values is a major source of frustration and delayed care.

An endocrinologist-led approach

Endocrinologists advocate for a nuanced, patient-specific approach:

- Testing at appropriate intervals
- Ensuring medication adherence before testing
- Using the same laboratory when possible
- Interpreting results in clinical context
- Recognising autoimmune thyroid disease as a spectrum, not a fixed state

Thyroid health exists on a continuum rather than a normal-or-abnormal scale. Thyroid disorders are common, but they are rarely simple. Misdiagnosis often arises not from lack of testing, but from over-testing, poor timing, inconsistent medication use, laboratory variability, and failure to recognise fluctuating autoimmune disease. Understanding these nuances helps patients and doctors move beyond isolated numbers and towards more accurate, compassionate, and effective thyroid care.

(The writer is a consultant - endocrinologist diabetes and thyroid at a Bengaluru hospital.)

BIOHACK OF THE WEEK

How to avoid blood sugar spikes

Ensuring your blood sugar levels are in the permissible range doesn't involve consuming superfoods or products that influencers peddle. All you need to do is take sensible and balanced steps. Here are some of them:

Steer clear of foods that lead to spikes and crashes; say no to pasta, potatoes, white bread or sweets. Replace with vegetables, meat or fish. These ensure that your sugar levels are in balance. Also, have meals with protein and fibre, along with carbohydrates so the impact of carb-related spikes are negated. Dress your carbs is a popular mantra, and it advocates pairing your carb with protein or fibre to ensure you are satiated.

While you can expect your blood sugar levels to go up immediately after a meal and drop later, frequent spikes and crashes are cause for worry.

Foods that have a high glycemic index (GI) score cause a quick blood sugar increase. Foods that have a low to moderate GI such as apples can cause a slower blood sugar rise.

Common-sensical steps such as keeping yourself hydrated, increasing healthy fats and avoiding sugary food, and drinks, and processed products help.

Above all else, ensure portion control. Eat timely and balanced meals. Even if you indulge in white rice or processed wheat flour-based products, ensure portion sizes are small. Balance it out with green leafy vegetables, sprouts and nuts.

A quick ten-minute walk immediately after a meal does wonders to your sugar levels – your muscles use up the glucose and reduce blood sugar levels.

Avoiding sitting for long periods; walking and using a standing desk helps as well.

Steer clear of stress and get enough sleep – these are underrated but play a key role in keeping blood sugar levels in balance.

Curated by Savitha Karthik

*(**Biohack of the Week** offers actionable tips to optimise your wellbeing.)*

ON THE PALETTE

A few of Gujral's works in metal, wood and on canvas.

A requiem for a nation's history

A sweeping centenary tribute honours Satish Gujral's restless imagination, shaped by loss and rupture, which redefined India's modern visual language, writes Neha Kirpal

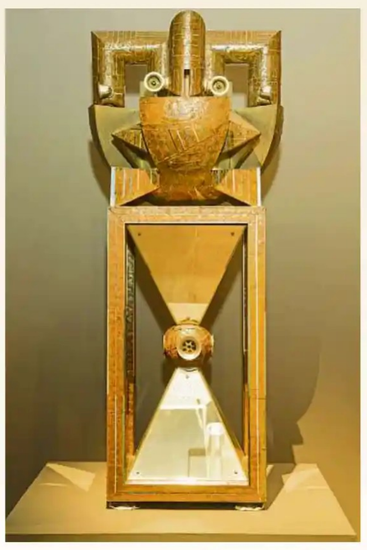
A centenary celebration of one of India's most versatile modernists, Satish Gujral, pays tribute to the painter, sculptor, muralist, architect and thinker's extraordinary seven-decade journey, whose art continues to define India's modern visual and cultural identity.

In collaboration with the National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA), the Ministry of Culture and the Government of India, this major retrospective, curated by Kishore Singh, brings together a constellation of exhibitions and programmes across India, tracing Gujral's evolution from muralist to modernist, and artist to architect.

"This exhibition takes a sweeping view of Gujral's career as an artist who shaped his own destiny within that of a newly born nation and its challenges, moving from occasionally faltering steps to those that confidently scaled the heights of ambition," said Singh.

Born in Jhelum (now in Pakistan), Gujral's journey was marked by both personal and national upheaval. A childhood accident that left him hearing-impaired deepened his inner world and propelled him toward visual expression. Trained at the Mayo School of Art, Lahore, and the Sir JJ School of Art, Bombay, he came of age among a generation of modern masters, including VS Gaitonde, MF Husain, Tyeb Mehta and Krishen Khanna. In his early years, Gujral was influenced by the socialist vision of his parents. He was first mentored by his father, who introduced him to poetry and politics. Later, his brother IK Gujral instilled in him a conviction that art could serve as a powerful catalyst for social change.

The Partition of India left an indelible mark on Gujral's early work, as he personally witnessed the horrors of the time, and it left an indelible mark on him. Paintings such as Mourners (1947–48), Snare of Memory (1954) and Days of Glory (1942) captured the anguish and endurance of a generation uprooted by history. These works, raw with empathy and expressionist power, earned him a scholarship to Mexico in 1952, where he apprenticed under Diego Rivera and David Alfaro Siqueiros. Returning to India, Gujral revolutionised muralism, introducing textured, sculptural surfaces crafted from ceramic, stone and metal. Across Delhi and Punjab, his monumental works transformed public spaces into enduring symbols of resilience and renewal.



In the 1970s, he extended his vision into architecture, conceiving buildings as "living sculptures." His design for the Belgian Embassy in New Delhi became an icon of modern Indian architecture, later listed among the 1,000 Outstanding Buildings of the Twentieth Century. For this achievement, he was awarded the Order of the Crown (Belgium). Other notable projects included the Gandhi Institute in Mauritius, Goa University, CMC in Hyderabad and Al Moughtara Palace in Riyadh. Over his career, he was honoured three times with the National Award for painting and sculpture, and in 1999, he received the Padma Vibhushan.

"His art ranged from the empathetic to the playful, from the poignant to the joyful. Rooted within his own experiences, it became a requiem for a nation's history—both national as well as individual, and therefore intimate," added Singh.

Established in 2008 by Mohit and Feroze Gujral, The Gujral Foundation is dedicated to supporting artists, architects and cultural innovators through collaborative platforms and forward-thinking initiatives. Guided by a vision to expand how Indian contemporary art engages with global discourse, the Foundation has spearheaded digital initiatives such as Artdemic and Vuedemic.

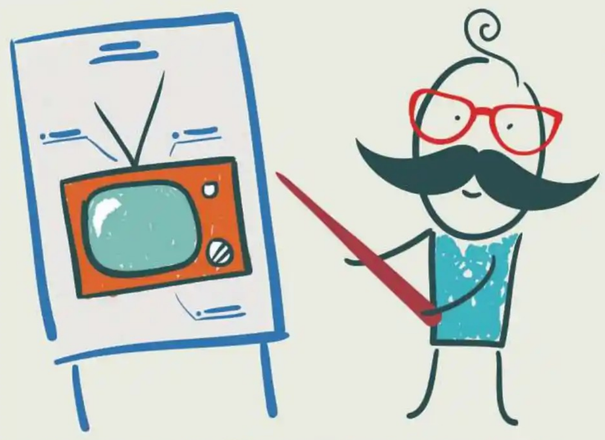
As part of the programme, there will be an Architectural Retrospective and Opening of the Gujral House curated by Reha Sodhi. Gujral created the space where home, studio and gallery merged seamlessly. Conceived in the 1950s by Raj Rewal and later reimagined and expanded by Gujral himself, the Lajpat Nagar residence became a sculpture in motion, responsive to its inhabitants, the shifting Delhi light and the passage of time. Over the decades, the Gujral House welcomed a constellation of artists, architects, writers and musicians, not merely as visitors but as collaborators who left their imprint on its evolving spirit.

In 2025, Mohit Gujral restored and adapted the home into an artistic offering for the city, a living site for exhibitions, gatherings and quiet activations. The centre will be managed and curated by the Gujral Foundation, with evolving programming and dialogue designed to keep the space vibrant, relevant and a meaningful contributor to contemporary culture.

Additional highlights through 2026 include the launch of the book, Masterpieces, at the Jaipur Literature Festival, a dedicated installation at the India Art Fair, architecture and design showcases at CEPT, Ahmedabad, retrospectives at NGMA, Bengaluru, and a concluding exhibition at the National Museum, Chandigarh—Gujral's city of origin.

Satish Gujral: A Century in Form, Fire, and Vision will continue at NGMA, New Delhi, till March 31.

ESOTERICA *A monthly exploratory infographic for the always curious*



TO MARK THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1ST PUBLIC DEMONSTRATION OF A TELEVISION SYSTEM, WE HAVE DUG OUT THE HISTORY OF

HOW A BRIBE BIRTHED THE BROADCAST AGE

1 The Dummy Who Took the Heat

On January 27, 1926, members of The Royal Institution of Great Britain (a community of scientists and inventors) had gathered in the crammed and drafty attic of a London laboratory to see John Logie Baird do something path-breaking, and dangerous! The Scottish inventor had created an apparatus that used German engineer Paul Nipkows' mechanical scanner system to convert moving images to electrical impulses and then, send those impulses via cable to a screen. Just a few months ago, the apparatus had successfully transmitted the image of Stookie Bill, a ventriloquist's dummy.

And now, Baird was attempting to transmit the image of a human face to prove his machine's worth. But this was easier said than done. Baird's apparatus used incredibly powerful, scorching lamps that produced immense heat and a blinding glare. Stookie Bill's head was subjected to such intense heat that it had begun to char and peel by the time its image appeared in the next room as a ghostly orange blob. Would Baird find somebody brave enough to risk burning his face?

2 The Office Boy's Five-Minute Fame

Baird thrust William Taynton, his 20-year-old office boy, into the hot seat. Initially, the experiment failed because Taynton, terrified by the whirring metal discs and the oppressive heat, backed away from the lens. It was only after Baird offered him a bribe of two shillings and sixpence that the boy sat still long enough for his image to be transmitted to the next room. Peering into the whirring contraption, he said "Hello, do you hear me?" The signal crossed 15 feet to a receiver projecting his moving lips – jerky, dim, but alive. Of course, the sound wasn't transmitted. Later, Taynton recalled the heat singeing his face, but his reluctant bravery had proved humans could be broadcast. He faded into obscurity, dying in 1989.

EVOLUTION OF TELEVISION

1930s: Soon after Baird's mechanical TV experiment, American teenager Philo Farnsworth used the cathode-ray tube (CRT) technology of the 1890s to scan an image with an electric beam, which enabled near-instantaneous reproduction on another screen. Both types competed for prominence but the CRT version had an edge because it was cheaper to produce.

1950s: Colour television arrives. Also, the first wireless remote control, which functioned by directing light onto 4 light sensors on the TV, is launched. Sometimes, the photosensitive TV would go crazy if direct sunlight hit it.

Mid 1990s: Plasma/flat screen TVs emerge.

1990s-2000s: The dawn of digital television and HD TV

2010s: Smart TVs arrive.

FUN FACTS

John Logie Baird's dummy inspired ventriloquist skits mimicking TV glitches.

By 1929, Baird had improved his experimental apparatus to 'Televisor' sets and begun selling them to hobbyists for as much as 25 pounds (Rs 1,88,000 today).

By 1929, when the BBC began experimental broadcasts using Baird's system, professional actors and singers were used. To improve contrast, these actors wore white flour on their skin and blue or black soap on their lips and eyes.

TEXT & DESIGN: SIDDHARTH MOHANTY | Key Source: earlytelevision.org, IET History of Technology

POT-POURRI

Chinese artist debuts in India

The first solo exhibition in India by Chinese dissident artist Ai Weiwei opened last week, featuring sculpture, installation and mixed media spanning his career, as well as his "homage" to the country. The son of a revered poet, 68-year-old Ai is perhaps China's best-known modern artist.

Ai Weiwei. PIC COURTESY: WIKIMEDIA

He helped design the famous "Bird's Nest" stadium for the 2008 Beijing Olympics, but fell out of favour after criticising the Chinese government and was imprisoned for 81 days in 2011. He eventually left for Germany four years later.

His show at New Delhi's Nature Morte gallery comes as India's relations ease with neighbouring China, although the world's two most populous nations remain strategic rivals in the region.

"This is my first exhibition in India... although there are only a dozen of my artworks, it covers several key points that trace more than 20 years," the artist, who did not attend the opening, said in a statement.

Gallery co-director Aparajita Jain said the show aimed to broaden understanding and artistic exchange.

"We're simply a space for expression—a place for conversation where we can learn about art practices from around the world and share histories," she told *AFP*. The exhibition includes Ai's large-scale Lego compositions "Surfing" and "Water Lilies", alongside works made from porcelain, stone and even buttons. The exhibition also features three pieces made "as a homage to India", Jain added—toy-brick works based on historic Indian paintings.

Visual arts student Disha Sharma, 20, travelled 90 kilometres (56 miles) from the city of Rohtak to see the opening. "It's not art that you immediately understand," said Sharma. "It makes you think." Srishti Rana Menon, an artist based at Nature Morte, said that seeing the work in India was exciting. "I wonder how he has put every little Lego piece together," she said, praising the "contemporary take" on traditional works.

The exhibition will run till February 22.

AFP

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Co-Educational English Medium, secular Day Cum Residential Institutions with a strength of around 6000 students located on a 20 Acre campus in the heart of SIRA city, 120KM from Bangalore on NH4, requires qualified, competent & experienced staff. Those fluent in English, effective in teaching / administration and looking for long-term association with the institution can apply for the following posts.

PRINCIPALS
Trained Post Graduates with minimum 05 years experience in the said post in reputed ICSE/CBSE Schools & PU Colleges with proven track record.
Salary: Rs. 100,000 - 1,50,000 pm based on competency.

THE PRESIDENCY PUBLIC SCHOOL - ICSE (KA-118)

MIDDLE / HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS
Trained Post Graduates/ Graduates in English, History, Geography, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Mathematics & Computer Application with Min. 2 years experience & a proven track record of teaching in ICSE Classes.
Salary: Rs.50,000 - 1,00,000 pm based on competency.

PRESIDENCY PU COLLEGE (UU0228)

LECTURERS
Trained Post Graduates in Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Mathematics, Computer Science &, English with min. 2 years Exp. & a proven track record of teaching in English medium classes and competency to train students for IIT-JEE, NEET & CET.
Salary: Rs.75,000 - 1,25,000 pm based on competency

THE PRESIDENCY PUBLIC SCHOOL - CBSE (No.830710)

SECONDARY TEACHERS
Trained Post Graduates/ Graduates in Science, Mathematics, English, Social Studies, Humanities & Computer Science with min. 2 years Experience & a proven track record of teaching in CBSE classes IX & X.
Salary: Rs. 50,000 -1,00,000 pm based on competency.

MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHERS
Trained Science / Arts / Humanities Graduates to teach VI - VIII classes with minimum 2 years experience.
Salary: Rs.35,000 - 60,000 pm based on competency.

PRIMARY TEACHERS
Graduates with D.Ed / B.Ed to teach I to V classes with min. 2 years experience.
Salary: Rs.30,000 - 50,000 pm based on competency.

NURSERY TEACHERS
Graduates with Nursery / Montessori Training with min. 2 years experience.
Salary: Rs.20,000 - 35,000 pm based on competency.

INDIAN LANGUAGE TEACHERS
Indian Language Teachers PRT/TGT/PGT in Kannada & Hindi with min. 2 years Exp.
Salary : State Scale

OTHERS
- Student Counselor
- Physical Education Teacher
- Fine Arts / Crafts
- Librarian
- Sports Coaches
- (Games/Swimming)
- Life Skill Instructors
- Lab Instructors
- Wardens (Gents/Ladies)

Salary : State Scale
Food & Accommodation will be provided on request

INTERVIEWS
Please send a hand written application with CV & Recent Passport Size photograph within 15 days to the Administrator at the above mentioned address. Short listed candidates will be called for interview. Preference will be given to female teachers and couples. interviews / Demo will be held in the month of February 2026.
tppsresource@gmail.com

Auden Group of Institutions
BSK III Stage, Bengaluru – 560085
Faculty Recruitment for the Academic Year 2026-27
Applications are invited for the following Teaching Post

Auden School
Affiliated to CBSE, New Delhi
#6, 7th Block, BSK III Stage,Bengaluru–85
School Affl. Code 830806
Ph.No:080-26722888
Email id: audenschool@gmail.com

- **Social Science Teacher** B.A. , B. Ed. / M.A., B.Ed.
- **Science Teacher (Physics, Chemistry and Biology)** B.Sc. , B.Ed. / M.Sc., B.Ed.
- **English Teacher** B.A. , B.Ed. / M.A. , B. Ed.

Auden Public School
Affiliated to CISCE, New Delhi
#17, Girinagar II Phase, Bengaluru-85.
(Behind Karyasiddhi Anjaneya Temple)
School Affl . Code KA084
Ph.No:080-26721901
Email id: audenpublicschool@gmail.com

- **HOD -Chemistry/ HOD-Physics** Required - Post Graduate Trained High School handling teacher with a minimum of 5 years experience or above
- **Physical Education Teacher** Post Graduate / Graduate with B.P.Ed
- **Computer Applications Teacher** BCA/MCA/B.E with B.Ed & with a minimum of 3 years Experience in High School

Please mail your CV to the given Email-Id.
Walk in Interview from 27-01-26 to 30-01-26 from 2.00 to 5.00 pm

ST. CHARLES HIGH SCHOOL (Affiliated to ICSE)
Kammanahalli, Bengaluru.
Requires
Invites application from experienced, qualified and innovative educators for the following posts:
PGT / TGT - Mathematics, Hindi & Integrated Science
PRT / TGT - English, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science & Computer Science
Nurse - Retired / Not in service
Ground Staff - Male Candidates
Minimum qualification : II PUC
Age Limit : Below 30 - 35 years
Interested candidates may apply with a detailed resume (qualification and experience) and latest photograph to
Email ID : stcharleskammanahalli@yahoo.co.in
Ph: 7259867189

VALLEY PUBLIC SCHOOL (ICSE) Narasapura, Kolar tq TEACHERS WANTED Sub: All subjects (Grade 1-10) Requirements: English fluency B. Ed compulsory/ Pursuing. Should be able to teach ICSE syllabus. Note: School is situated 20 mins from Hoskote. Transportation to KR.Puram/ Hoskote/ Kolar will be provided. WhatsApp resume to 9901593849 or Mail: info@valleypublicschool.net

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(7200200946)

Wanted Bride
Muslim 28 Years / 5'10/ M S in Engineering/ Working in USA/ Green Card Holder/ 3 Cr/ Looking a educated girl
(7200200946)

Telugu

Wanted Bride
Telugu Boy 1994 Born/ 5'10/ Bangalore Resident/ MD / Doctor/ Looking for a Suitable Match
080-69103135

Wanted Bride
Telugu Boy 1999 Born / Businessman/ Only Son/ High Class Family of Bangalore is looking for a Match
080-69103135

Grooms Wanted

Telugu

Wanted Groom
Telugu Beautiful girl 2003 Born / 5'5/ From a Affluent Family / BLR/ 2000 Cr Networth/ Only Daughter/ Looking for a suitable Match
080-69103135

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PERSONAL

Change of Name

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